

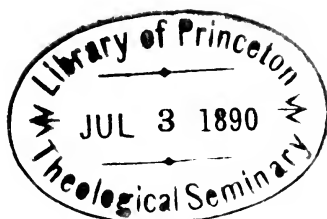
# OUR REST DAY

BY

*Thomas Hamilton D.D.*



JAMES GEMMELL  
EDINBURGH



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Our rest-day

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# OUR REST-DAY:

ITS ORIGIN, HISTORY, AND CLAIMS,

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PRESENT-DAY NEEDS.

BY

THOMAS HAMILTON, D.D.,

BELFAST.

BEING THE ESSAY TO WHICH WAS AWARDED A PRIZE OF ONE HUNDRED POUNDS  
OFFERED BY THE SABBATH ALLIANCE OF SCOTLAND.

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*New Edition, Revised and Enlarged.*

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“*Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis aevum.*”

*Q. Horatius Flaccus.*

EDINBURGH:

JAMES GEMMELL, 19 GEORGE IV. BRIDGE.

1888.



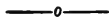
TO  
THE REV. W. D. KILLEN, D.D.,  
PRESIDENT AND PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY  
AND PASTORAL THEOLOGY, ASSEMBLY'S COLLEGE,  
BELFAST,

TO THE YEARS SPENT AT WHOSE FEET THE WRITER OF THE FOLLOWING PAGES  
LOOKS BACK AS AMONG THE HAPPIEST OF HIS LIFE, AND TO WHOSE  
SAGACIOUS COUNSEL, PROFOUND LEARNING, AND FAITHFUL  
FRIENDSHIP HE HAS OFTEN SINCE BEEN INDEBTED,  
THIS TREATISE IS RESPECTFULLY

Dedicated.



## PREFACE.



THE history of this treatise may be told in a few words. In 1883, the Sabbath Alliance of Scotland offered four prizes of £100, £50, £30, and £20 respectively, for the best four essays on the Sabbath, which should be sent to them before July 31st, 1884.\* The difficult task of adjudicating on the merits of these was entrusted to the Rev. Professor Mitchell, D.D., St. Andrews, the Rev. John Marshall Lang, D.D., Barony Parish, Glasgow; the Rev. Principal Rainy, D.D., New College, Edinburgh; the Rev. Andrew Thomson, D.D., Edinburgh; and the Rev. J. Chalmers Burns, D.D., Corstorphine. Over two hundred and forty essays were lodged with the Secretary of the Sabbath Alliance before the specified date, and out of these the adjudicators, in the July of this year, unanimously selected that which

\* The Alliance were enabled to offer these prizes through the liberality of a large hearted friend of the Sabbath, J. T. Morton, Esq., London.

appears in the following pages as the best. To the writer thereof was accordingly awarded the prize of £100, and it is now published in accordance with the terms of the original proposal, and with the earnest hope that its circulation and perusal may do some service to the cause of the Sabbath of the Lord.

It is right to mention that the line of discussion to be pursued in the essays was fixed by the Committee of the Sabbath Alliance. Possibly, had the present writer been left to his own free choice, the consideration of some topics of which he has treated might have been omitted, and that of others added.

The literature of the Sabbath question is immense, and not much of it was left unexamined in the course of the writer's study. To mention all the volumes which were consulted would be to compile a very tedious catalogue. The larger works on the subject, such as Dr. Hessey's Bampton Lectures, and Dr. Gilfillan's treatise on "The Christian Sabbath viewed in the light of Reason, Revelation and History," must of course be made use of by every student of the question. Professor M'Gregor's little book, "The Sabbath Question: Historical,

Scriptural and Practical," (Edinburgh, Duncan Grant, 1866), is not so well known, at least on this side of the Channel, although it contains much excellent matter. There are also two pamphlets, small in size, but replete with sound thought and accurate reasoning, which the writer has special pleasure in mentioning, inasmuch as their authors are two of the ornaments of the Church to which he has the honour to belong. These are: "The Permanent Obligation of the Decalogue," a sermon by the Rev. Robert Watts, D.D., Professor of Divinity in Assembly's College, Belfast, and "The Sabbath not a Church Holiday, but a Divine Ordinance under all dispensations," by the Rev. Thomas Witherow, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Magee College, Londonderry. Both of these have been consulted with great advantage in the preparation of this essay. The help derived from other sources will be found acknowledged in the body of the work.

With these prefatory observations, the treatise is now left to the kindly consideration and unbiassed judgment of the reader. Let its arguments and conclusions be tried by the unerring standard of the Word of God, to which

appeal is made throughout, and the writer cannot doubt that their correctness will be admitted. May the Lord of the Sabbath use the book for the service of the Day which He Himself has made !

BROOKVALE HOUSE,  
BELFAST, *October*, 1885.

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## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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IN this New Edition the original Essay has been carefully revised throughout, some matter of mere transitory interest has been omitted, three new chapters, entitled respectively “ The Change of Day,” “ Some Nineteenth Century Sabbath-keepers,” and “ How the Conflict goes on,” have been added, and the text has been elucidated and strengthened by a body of notes.

In this enlarged and improved form, it is hoped that the book will render increased service to the good cause for the advancement of which it was at first written.

BROOKVALE HOUSE,  
BELFAST, *August*, 1888.



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# OUR REST-DAY.



## CHAPTER I.

### *INTRODUCTORY.*

**I**N some of the coal-mining districts of England there is found a curious deposit which the miners call "Sunday Stone." On making a section of a piece of it, it is seen to consist of layers of stalagmitic matter, regularly superimposed on each other, with this peculiarity, that after six strata of a blackish hue there appears, with the utmost regularity, one stratum of pure white—then six more of the black, with a seventh of the white, and so on through the entire thickness of the deposit. The explanation of this remarkable formation is easy. Down in the coal-mine, water, filtrating through the limestone roof, becomes highly impregnated with carbonate of lime. Dropping on the floor in a continual trickle, this forms a deposit. While the miners are at work, the coal-dust which pervades the atmosphere, mingling with the dropping water, imparts a blackish hue to the deposit. But when the Day of Rest comes round, on which the mine is quiet, the water, having nothing to sully its purity, deposits a layer of beautifully white mineral; and so, by examining such a section as we have spoken of, one can trace back the history of the mine through all the weeks up to the first Sabbath which has left its white mark upon the rock.

Now, let us imagine for a moment that, ages hence, all our present institutions and order of things, civil and religious, had disappeared, swept away by successive national catastrophes. The New Zealander, with whom Lord Macaulay has made us all familiar, sits on the broken arch of London Bridge, and meditates on what London may have been in the ages long gone by. He roams through the country, as the traveller now wanders among the mounds of Assyria. He peers curiously into all the relics of the life of the great empire which is no more. Among the rest he comes on a block of this "Sunday stone" in some disused mine of the Black Country. He notes with wonderment its bands of snowy white recurring so regularly after the six of smutty black. In other parts of the deserted colliery he discovers other blocks of similar stalagmite in process of formation before his eyes; and all these are pure white—no layer of black running through them. Being an intelligent New Zealander, as one of such an era, the heir of all the ages, is likely to be, he hits upon the secret of the formation of the "Sunday stone." He concludes, according to the fact, that this mysteriously-marked piece of rock in his hand has been formed by deposition, like the mass of stalagmite now forming in snowy purity upon the mine floor. But he reasons further that, during six days in the lives of those people among the ruins of whose civilisation he is treading, the water which percolated through the rock and dripped upon the floor was contaminated with dust—dust raised by toil among those black coal-seams portions of which still remain, raised by some of those picks which lie broken at his feet; but that during the seventh day no grimy particles defiled the air or water; no work therefore was done; that the rule of these lands, in the days whose remains he is examining, was six day's work and one day's rest. And he

sets himself to solve the problem thus presented to him—How came it that these busy old Englishmen intermitted all labour for a seventh of time?

Our position, in entering upon the inquiry to be pursued in this essay, we desire to be a somewhat similar one. We find recurring, at its regular septenary intervals in the course of the world's affairs, this white-marked day. Six days the dust of the world's business darkens. One is free from it, more or less. Here is a phenomenon to be accounted for—surely a very remarkable phenomenon. We are so familiar with it that it strikes us as nothing strange that over all Christendom, after every six days of toil, comes one of intermission, devoted to rest by common consent. But surely it is a most impressive thought that thus over all the earth, from Labrador to the Coral Isles, from India in the East to the Rocky Mountains in the West, this Day of Rest is kept—kept by people of many different races—Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, Teutonic, Slav; of many different creeds—Protestant, Latin Church, Greek Church, and kept through age after age, as far back as history carries us. What is the explanation of this observance? Whence this common consent? Does it rest on any authoritative basis? If so, what is that basis? Is it a basis laid down by human authority or Divine? Where is that authority discoverable? What is its history? How far back does it extend? How widely does it reach? What is the exact nature of its requirements? These are the topics now to be discussed. They are topics of widely reaching interest. They concern the antiquarian, the theologian, the historian, the social economist, the philanthropist. Not one of their domains is untouched by this marvellous Sabbath institution. But it concerns more than these—it concerns every man to know is he called upon to observe a weekly day of rest—if so, by what authority and with what manner of ob-

servance, and for what ends? Why, to recur to our illustration, this septenary streak of white after the six of dusky black?

Into this inquiry I invite the reader to accompany me. Let us endeavour to divest ourselves of all prejudice or bias on the question, in one direction or other. Let us only desire to know what is the truth. It concerns us to know it. Interests of the vastest importance depend on the knowledge, and on the carrying of that knowledge into practice. Let us throw open all the windows of the soul to all the light we can find. Let us breathe a prayer as we do so, that He who himself is Light may shine in upon us, that in His light we may see light on this great subject, and may learn truly what is His will regarding it!

To avoid confusion or misapprehension, let it be understood at the outset, that in this essay certain things are assumed. It is assumed, for instance, that there is a God, and that this God has spoken to us in the Bible—the Word of God. If there are any among the readers of these pages who traverse either or both of these positions, we cannot here stay to argue with them. Our inquiry proceeds on a Theistic basis, and on a Biblical basis. The fact of the existence of God implies the authority of God. Supreme authority is involved in the very idea of a Supreme Being. It is His to command. Being God, He will command nothing but what is right. It is for His creatures to obey, satisfied that implicit obedience is at once their duty and their interest. Therefore, if He has spoken, as He has, in the Bible, whatever He has declared there is most surely to be believed, because it is so declared, and whatever He has indicated as His will is most carefully to be obeyed, because it is His will. Moreover, that revelation of His is to be taken in its plain grammatical meaning. Its histories are neither to be transmuted into myths nor allegories. Its

statements are not to have read into them non-natural senses, such as similar statements in any other book would never be subjected to. The fact that this Bible is a revelation for man, therefore intended surely to be understood by man, so far as he is capable of understanding it, is to be kept in view. No doubt there may be expected in it things "hard to be understood." The fly, which creeps over the enriched capital of the splendidly carved cathedral column, can as little comprehend all the proportions of the vast edifice in which he walks, as man all the greatness of the Temple of Inspiration. But this he can comprehend, and must believe, that this Book of Inspiration is not a mockery, professing to give him what in reality it does not, keeping the word of promise to the ear but breaking it to the hope, putting into his hands a revelation of the will of his God which in reality no revelation, but a mystical, allegorical, obscure utterance, out of which when he strives to extract the plain meaning which its plain words bear upon their face—he is told he has extracted a meaning which is not there. The Bible, being God's book for man, man must be able, by the exercise of the powers with which that God has endowed him, to comprehend it, else it ceases to be a revelation—an unveiling of the mind of God, and sinks to the level of Delphic or Dodonian oracles, with its characteristics like theirs, equivocation and ambiguity. Postulating these necessary things—the existence of a God and the reality of a revelation, we proceed with our inquiry.

## CHAPTER II.

### *“HOW OLD ART THOU?”*

**T**AKING up the Bible, and opening it at its first book, we find that it commences (as we should naturally expect a book intended for the instruction of man in God's will to commence) with an account of the creation of the world in which we dwell. We are told in this account that the world is a created world, not a self-evolved one, and that its Creator was God. The manner and order of this creation are then described. We are told that the work occupied the Divine Artificer for six days. On the sixth the creation of man took place. Earth, over which he was to have dominion, and which was to be his home, being made and fully furnished, he is introduced into his destined dwelling, and receives directions as to his care of it and of himself. So that wondrous week terminates, and we read—“And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made” (Gen. ii. 2-3). Or, as the passage literally rendered from the Hebrew would read—“Then finished God on the seventh day his work which he had made, and rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. Then blessed God the seventh day and hallowed it, because in it he had rested from all his work which created had God to make.”

Here is a plain statement—plain at least thus far, that it indicates a certain action on the part of the Almighty, and a certain purpose. Some things about these opening chapters of the Scriptures may not be plain. Science and theology may not be able yet to see precisely how God's two revelations, that whose pages are the rocky strata of the Stone-Book, and these pages written with ink by His inspiration, precisely fit into each other. Two independent witnesses, they give their separate accounts of the earth's past, both leading up to a beginning, and neither contradicting the other. Being both Divine, the Work and the Word proceeding from the same hand, they could not contradict each other. But where the one record fits into the other, opinions may and do differ. With which of the great geological periods does such and such a day in Genesis correspond? Does it correspond precisely with any of them? Where in the Genesis story is the parallel passage to this in the Earth story, or is there an exact parallel passage to it there at all—does it not belong to some interval not spoken of there?—these and such-like questions are relevant and permissible, for the record in Genesis makes no statement as to its points of correspondence with the record in the rocks. But no question is permissible or possible as to this fact—that after six days of work “God rested on the seventh day,” nor as to this other, that, in addition, “He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work.” There is a plain statement, which, unless words were intended really to conceal and not to reveal thought, clearly conveys to the reader, and, because it conveys, must have been intended to convey to him, that the Creator, having spent six days in work, devoted the seventh to rest, and, because He did so, “blessed and sanctified” that day.

We are, of course, aware that some have interpreted

these "days" in this opening portion of Genesis as not ordinary days of twenty-four hours each, but periods of indefinite length. This view is not a modern one. Many people are under the impression that it is to the discoveries of geology that it owes its origin. The fact, however, is not so. Long before the researches of the palæontologist had caused the first chapter of the Pentateuch to be re-studied in the light which they had shed on the early history of the world, men like Josephus and Philo among the Jews, and Descartes and Whiston among Christians, held that these Mosaic days were long periods. More than one modern name of eminence can be quoted in support of this theory. It does not fall within the scope of our inquiry to discuss it. Undoubtedly the word day is used in Scripture in various senses. In Daniel it means a year. Even among ourselves, if we make the sun the arbiter of its length, we must remember that at the poles the sun sets on the 25th of September and does not rise again till the 16th of March, and at another time of the year he does not disappear for weeks together below the horizon. If we adopt the day-period theory, we do not, say its advocates, at all lose the force of the argument for the Sabbath which has been drawn from the Scripture now before us. Hugh Miller, in his "Testimony of the Rocks," maintains this position, arguing that as it is a seventh portion of time that is claimed for God, that seventh portion remains demandable whether the Genesis day be long or short.

"It has been urged," he says, "that this scheme of periods is irreconcilable with that Divine 'reason' for the institution of the Sabbath, which He who appointed the day of old, has in His goodness vouchsafed to man. I have failed to see any force in the objection. God the Creator, who wrought during the six periods, rested during the seventh period, and, as we have no evidence whatever that He recommenced His work of creation,



as, on the contrary, man seems to be the last formed of creatures, God may be resting still. The presumption is strong that His Sabbath is an extended period, not a natural day, and that the work of Redemption is His Sabbath-day's work. And so I cannot see that it in the least interferes with the integrity of the reason rendered, to read it as follows—Work during six periods and rest on the seventh; for in six periods the Lord created the heavens and the earth, and in the seventh period He rested. The Divine period may have been very great—the human periods very small; just as a vast continent or the huge earth itself is very great, and a map or geographical globe is very small. But if in the map or globe the proportions be faithfully maintained, and the scale, though a minute one, be true in all its parts and applications, we pronounce the map or globe, notwithstanding the smallness of its size, a faithful copy. Were man's Sabbath to be kept as enjoined, and in the Divine proportions, it would scarcely interfere with the logic of 'the reason annexed to the fourth commandment,' though in this matter, as in all others in which man can be an imitator of God, the imitation should be a miniature one."\*

Happily it is not required of us that in these pages we should adjudicate on the merits of this theory. Certain difficulties suggest themselves regarding it to the ordinary reader of Scripture. Why, for instance, are "evening" and "morning" mentioned in speaking of the days, if ordinary days are not intended? Why does the group of days precisely amount to a week, if the days are not really the days of a week, but great ages? If each of the six days, again, is a long age, then the seventh must be the same, and the question arises and demands an answer—in what sense has it been "blessed and sanctified?" It is, we must sup-

\* "Testimony of the Rocks."

pose, still in progress. We are probably living in it. How is it blessed and sanctified beyond those which preceded it? It would divert us too far from our proper purpose to inquire into these difficulties. One thing, however, is clear, and that one thing is all that is necessary for our purpose. We have here a Rest-day, observed by the Divine Being, and not only observed by Him, but blessed and sanctified by Him. What is this, we ask any unprejudiced reader, but the institution by Divine example of the Sabbath Day, and the setting apart of that Sabbath Day for holy uses by mankind?

It has been argued, indeed, that we have in the verses which we have quoted from Genesis, only an instance of the figure of speech called prolepsis. Paley, in his "*Moral and Political Philosophy*," after citing the passage, says—"The words do not assert that God then blessed and sanctified the seventh day, but that He blessed and sanctified it for that reason, and if any ask why the Sabbath or sanctification of the seventh day was then mentioned, if it was not then appointed, the answer is at hand—the order of connection, and not of time, introduced the mention of the Sabbath in the history of the subject which it was ordained to commemorate." But where, we ask, is there any hint in the narrative of anything of the kind? On Paley's principles, we must read the passage somewhat thus—"On the seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And, many years afterwards, God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." But such an interpretation really amounts to an interpolation. It alters the passage. To get Paley's meaning into it, we must insert additional words. Once admit such a mode of dealing with Scripture, or of dealing with any other book, and we may bid farewell to certainty regarding any author's mean-

ing. Take the other Edenic ordinance, marriage — how could we tell, on Paley's principles, that it was instituted in Eden? The account given of its institution may be proleptical as well as that given of the institution of the Sabbath. No history could stand if subjected to such treatment. The plainest and most unvarnished statement might be so twisted and distorted as to bear a meaning the exact contrary of that intended by its author.

Leaving this, however, we proceed to make the following remarks on this first Sabbath. Evidently the institution was intended for man. Because—

(a.) God needed no rest for Himself. "The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary." In His resting, therefore, He cannot have had a view to Himself. He must have had a view to man whom he had just made. This will further appear if we reflect that—

(b.) The very first day whose dawn man saw was the Day of Rest. He was brought into being on the sixth day of the creation week. The Sabbath was instituted on the seventh.

"The first sunrise that our first parents saw,  
Dawned on their day of consecrated rest,  
Of all days, even in Paradise, the best;  
From such original that gift we draw;  
And wedded love, even like the Sabbath law,  
Ordained in Eden, has outlived the Fall;  
And these the bliss of Paradise recall  
Even in the wilderness."

It was not given to the world before he came into being, because it was not needed, and might have been misunderstood as not for him. It was not given after the lapse of an interval, lest again he should mistake its purpose and application and meaning. But immediately after his creation it is presented to him, that his first entire day of life may be given to God, the

first fruits of all his time, that he may learn impressively his obligation to God on his very entrance into being, and learn also the truth afterwards put into words by the Lord of the Sabbath—"The Sabbath was made for man."

(c.) The Sabbath was given to the first father of the human race. Not to Abraham, the father of the Jews. If it had been, there might have been ground for the cry—the Sabbath is a mere Jewish institution. But it is given to Adam, the father of Jew and Gentile alike, the father of us all. No doubt the institution was subsequently re-given to the Jews, with fresh sanctions and penalties, as marriage, its twin Edenic sister, was also re-given. But as no one will attempt to argue that the re-enaction of the marriage law, in a Jewish form, for Jews, does away with the original gift of wedlock to all mankind through their first parents, so neither can the same be properly argued of the Sabbath. It was to man the gift was originally made, and unless it can be shown (which no one has yet done, and no one can) that the gift has been revoked, we must rank it among the gifts of God which are "without repentance."

(d.) In consonance with all this comes in our Lord's declaration—"The Sabbath was made for man." In another part of this essay this text will be fully commented on and its exegesis traced. Here, taking but one limb of the antithesis, I lay stress upon that broad statement—"made for man"—not for God, who needed it not, but for man;—not for unfallen angels, who have the better Sabbath of the upper sanctuary, but for man; not for the fallen spirits, "Sabbathless Satan," as Charles Lamb strikingly calls him, and the legions of the pit, where no sweet Day of Rest ever breaks in upon the eternal woe, but for man, universal man; not for Jewish man, nor Gentile man; not for savage man, nor civilised man; not for fallen man, nor unfallen

man; not for Eastern races to the exclusion of Western, nor for Western to the exclusion of Eastern; but for man, for the race, so that wherever there is a human being on God's broad earth, that man can claim his Sabbath rest, and whosoever deprives him of it robs both him and God.

(e.) The same truth also appears from the phraseology of the verses in Genesis which we are considering. It is not only said God “rested,” but He “blessed” the day and “sanctified” it. Now God's action of resting on the day would, we believe, have been sufficient warrant for our keeping it as He kept it. Why should He have divided His creative work over that precise portion of time, working six days and then resting one, if not to give His creatures a specimen of the kind of weeks He wished them to keep, divided after the same model and occupied in the same manner? Can any other good reason be given for His action? It is a valid argument that the example of our Lord and His Apostles in observing the First Day of the week as the Lord's Day is sufficient warrant for our observing it. The advocates of the Dominical theory hold that that example is the charter of the day, which they dissociate altogether (most wrongly, as we hope to show further on) from the Sabbath of the Old Testament. Why should they lay such stress on the example of the Master and His Apostles after the Resurrection, and refuse all weight and significance to the example of the Divine Being after Creation? If, on their theory, the former example establishes a Lord's Day, why not the latter? Why attribute meaning and purpose to the one act and refuse meaning and purpose to the other act performed by the same Being under circumstances so similar?

But, in addition to resting on that first Sabbath, the Creator “blessed” and “sanctified” the day. What

was the meaning of these actions? A blessing, it is to be noted, had been previously given to man on his creation, and to other living creatures. The account given of those blessings may help us to understand the nature of this. In Gen. i. 22 it is said of the living creatures which the water brought forth—"God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth." Again in Gen. i. 28, on the creation of man, it is said "God blessed them and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." These two blessings, therefore, evidently consisted in constituting these two portions of His creation His agents for the performance of the duties given them to do, and bestowing upon them His benediction in the performance of these duties. When He blessed the Sabbath, He simply, *mutatis mutandis*, did the same for it. He constituted it a vehicle of blessing to mankind, and stamped it with His approval as such a vehicle. But He not only blessed but "sanctified" the day. What is this sanctification? Just what it is when the word is used of the Tabernacle and its vessels in the latter books of Moses. It is said in Exodus that these were to be "sanctified." And the Hebrew word used there is the same as here in Genesis, קָדַשׁ. It is generally agreed that this word, when used of the Tabernacle and its furniture, means to set apart to a holy use. You cannot communicate a moral quality to an insensate utensil. But you can dedicate it to a holy service. This was done with the Tabernacle and its vessels, and obviously the word has the same meaning when applied to the Sabbath. God sanctified the Sabbath by setting it apart to sacred uses for all time—sacred uses for man, for his own good and his Maker's glory.

If all this do not amount to the institution of a weekly Sabbath for man in all time coming—this

Divine example, this Divine blessing, this Divine sanctification, so expressly and so expressively narrated—then we do not fear to assert that we fail to see what intelligible meaning or purpose is to be extracted from the narrative. Nor can we see how, when the Creator wished to establish a Day of Rest, He could have done so by any action or any words, if the words and the action of this narrative do not amount to such an establishment. If they do not do it, what others would?

(f.) Let us now link on this Genesis narrative to the Fourth Commandment of the Decalogue, as God Himself has in the Commandment linked it on, and see how the case stands. In a subsequent section we shall consider this Commandment at length, in its character, and its intention, and reach, as a commandment of the Decalogue. Here we merely notice how the view which we have given of the meaning of the Divine rest on the first Sabbath, and the Divine blessing and sanctification of it, is borne out in the commandment. It expressly bases man's Sabbath rest on that rest of God. "Remember the Sabbath day," it says, "to keep it holy—six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, *and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.*" The Sabbatic rest of the Creator is expressly made the argument for the Sabbatic rest of the creature, and the significance which that rest had from the first is expressly given to it in legal form.

A strong *a fortiori* argument for the universal and continual observance of the Sabbath can be built upon

this fact of its original institution. If it was needed in those early days of the world's existence, when men had no sin, no sorrow, no harassing toil, no carking care, to burden and weary mind and body—when every day was, in a sense, a Sabbath—how much more is it needed now by a world steeped to the lips in business, and drawn incessantly away from God by the enticements of the evil heart! If in the first century, A.M., it was needed, when the Creator was constantly walking among His then little family of mankind, how much more is it demanded by this nineteenth century, A.D., with its incessant din of business drowning the sound of the holy voices which speak to the soul! Who shall say that for a Sabbath fenced in by the same Divine sanctions as guarded the primeval Sabbath, there is not now a need as much stronger as this age is more drawn away from the love and service of the Creator, and from its own peace and quiet rest by its own insatiable appetites, and by the demands of modern civilisation? If God provided in the beginning for the lesser need, are we to say that He has now left us in our greater, uncared for by the same beneficent legislation which in the beginning so mercifully blessed Adam and his children? Who that has any knowledge of the love of God will say so?

(g.) The fact that in this rest of the Creator upon the first Sabbath, and in the concomitant blessing and sanctification of the day we have the institution of the Sabbath, is further borne out by the incidental traces of a septenary division of time which we meet with from creation onwards. Those to which we refer are such statements as that Cain and Abel presented their offerings before God “at the end of days” (Gen. iv. 3, *margin*), (what days, if not some known and familiar series?)—that God observed the weekly interval in the preparations for the Deluge (Gen. vii. 4, 10)—that Noah observed the same interval while in the ark



(Gen. viii. 10, 12)—that wedding festivals were accustomed to last for a week (Gen. xxix. 27), and funeral ceremonies for the same period (Gen. l. 10)—that the passover feast lasted a week (Exod. xii. 3-20)—and that the Sabbath was a well-known institution at the time of the fall of the manna, before the Decalogue was given (Exod. xvi. 22-30). Whence did this septenary division come? Whence this week? All our other great divisions of time are suggested by Nature—day and night by sunrise and sunset—the month by the moon's period—the year by the cycle of the seasons. But whence the week? Some would have us believe that it is merely the period of one of the lunar changes. But these periods are not periods of precisely seven days. This explanation therefore will not hold. As little will that which refers this septenary division of time to the number of the seven planets. What did they know in those primeval ages of the number of the planets? The fact is, we can find no possible explanation of the existence of the week save that which bases it on the existence of the Sabbath. If we take the plain meaning of the Scripture records, all is clear. If, in our dislike of them, we fly to any theory which will enable us to dispense with the information which they supply, we only land ourselves in confusion and mistake.

One more point and this portion of our argument will be complete. It is the uniform representation of Scripture that our Blessed Lord was identified with the Father in creation work. As examples of passages which assert this, the reader is referred to such Scriptures as—Col. i. 16—"By Him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by Him and for Him,"—Heb. i. 2—"His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He

made the worlds,"—John i. 3—"All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made." What a light these passages throw on that remarkable utterance of the Master—"The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath" (Mark ii. 28)! Leaving out of account for the present the part taken by the Father and the Holy Spirit in Creation work, and confining our attention to the Son's action, which we are told by the passages just referred to was an all-pervading action, so much so that, "without Him was not anything made that was made,"—we see how and why and to what extent He was the Sabbath's Lord. He made it. It is His appointment. He first sanctioned and sanctified it by His example. Therefore He can interpret it, alter it, use it as He pleases. Especially, when He comes to earth as the legate of heaven, what He does and says regarding it has all the authority of a law of the Creator.

A careful study, then, of Holy Scripture and of the early history of mankind, must lead the unprejudiced inquirer to the undoubted conclusion that the Sabbath dates from Creation. It is no new religious appointment. It is the oldest sacred institution in the world—thousands of years older than the Decalogue, older than the Bible itself, older than its twin Edenic relic—marriage, only a little younger than this old earth.

The hoary rime of thousands of years is on thy head, O blessed Sabbath! Old, yet art thou still young—no trace upon thee of effeteness or decay, and as beautiful as ever thou wast—

"Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow ;  
Such as Creation's dawn beheld thee first, thou shinest now."

## CHAPTER III.

### TRACES OF THE SABBATH IN ANCIENT LANDS AND LITERATURES.

IT may be said—if the Sabbath was instituted immediately after creation, and given to mankind to be observed ever after, one should expect to find traces of its existence and observance in other books than the Bible and among other peoples than those whose life is there recorded. No doubt we should. Of course, as we know from sacred story, the knowledge of God became dim at a very early period of the world's history, and these traces of a Sabbath may therefore be expected to be dim likewise, and impregnated with corrupt notions. Still there ought to be such traces more or less clear. And there are. Let me proceed to put some of them before the reader.

That a sacred seventh day was known to the Greeks at a very early period, a considerable series of quotations from Homer, Hesiod, Linus and Callimachus can be adduced to prove. In Homer, whose date was about 900 B.C., we find the following—

“*Ἑβδομάτῃ δ' ἤπειτα κατήλυθεν ἱερὸν ἡμᾶρ :*”

Then came the seventh, the sacred day.

“*Ἑβδομῃ ᾗν ἱερή :*”

The seventh (day) was sacred.

“*Ἑβδομον ἡμᾶρ ἔην καὶ τῷ τετέλεστο ἅπαντα :*”

It was the seventh day wherein all things were finished.

“*Ἑβδομάτῃ δ' ἥδ' ἰλίπομεν ῥόον ἐξ Ἀχέροντος :*”

We left the flood of Acheron on the seventh day.

In Hesiod, whose date was about 800 B.C., the following occur—

- “Πρῶτον ἔννῃ, τετράς τε, καὶ ἐβδόμῃ ἱερὸν ἡμῶν :  
The first, the fourth, and the seventh days are sacred.  
“Ἐβδομάτῃ δ’ αὖτις λαμπρὸν φάος ἡελίοιο :”  
The seventh again, the glorious light of the sun.

In Linus, whose date is unknown, and Callimachus, who flourished about 256 B.C., we get the following—

- “Ἐβδομάτῃ δ’ ἥδη τετελεσμένα πάντα τέτυκται :”  
The seventh day wherein all things were finished.  
“Ἐβδόμῃ ἐν ἀγαθοῖς, καὶ ἐβδόμῃ ἐστὶ γενέθλη  
“Ἐβδόμῃ ἐν πρωτοῖσι, καὶ ἐβδόμῃ ἐστὶ τελείῃ :”  
The seventh day is among the good things, and the seventh is the nativity.  
The seventh is among the chiefest, and the seventh is the perfect (day).  
“Ἐπτά δὲ πάντα τέτυκται ἐν οὐρανῷ ἀστεροεντ’,  
“Ἐν κυκλῶσι φανέντ’ ἐπιτελλομένοις ἐνιαυτοῖς.”  
In seven all things were completed, in the starry heavens which appear in their orbs, in the rolling years.

I am quite aware that doubt has been cast on the authenticity of some of these quotations, and on the relevancy of others. They were first collated by Aristobulus, a peripatetic philosopher of Alexandria. From him Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius copied them. The Rev. T. S. Hughes, in a letter written to Godfrey Higgins, Esq., about the year 1826, which was afterwards published, affirmed that he had searched for several of them in vain in the works of the authors referred to, and, following him, some have doubted the propriety of laying much stress upon them. But is it not quite possible that some of the works from which Aristobulus, Clement, and Eusebius quoted have perished? No one can affirm that we possess all the works of these authors in a complete state. Of the Linus referred to, it is admitted that nothing is known. But many authors must have existed in those remote periods of whom we now know nothing. A thousand

years hence, not a few writers who now wield the pen cleverly enough, and enjoy some literary reputation, will be utterly forgotten, the printing press and British Museum Library notwithstanding. It would be a huge pity of the world if every scribbler attained immortality. Is it very probable—is it conceivable—that Aristobulus would publish the excerpts we have given, and that he would have them adopted by such authorities as Clement and Eusebius, and by subsequent writers, many of whom had the means of verifying them, or of exposing a literary fraud, at command, and yet that all the while he was only palming off an imposture on the world? We cannot think so. To us the fact that we cannot now discover all the passages referred to is very far indeed from being a proof that they never existed. We have in the Acts of the Apostles a quoted saying of our Blessed Lord Himself—"It is more blessed to give than to receive"—which is not to be found in any of the inspired biographies of the Redeemer. Do we therefore reject it as spurious? Is not our feeling, on the contrary, one of gratitude that such a precious word has been rescued from oblivion and preserved to us by the writer of the Acts? Similarly, we submit that very much more and very much stronger evidence must be brought forward against the passages in question, before we can be required to give them up. In regard to one of them, indeed—"Then came the seventh day which is sacred"—it seems that it is the day of the month, not of the week, that is directly referred to by Homer. The same remark must be made regarding the reference to the seventh day in the first citation from Hesiod. But, bating all this, there still remains enough to show that in those very early times there was in Greece more than an inkling of the sacredness of the number seven and of the seventh day.

It would occupy too much of our time and space to

show from Latin authors that a knowledge of the sacredness of the seventh day existed from an early period among the Romans. This is admitted. We prefer calling attention now to more recent discoveries of the existence of a knowledge of the Day of Rest in early ages and distant lands, which we owe to the vigour with which, in this nineteenth century, researches in the East have been prosecuted by explorers. For example, it is well known that the late Mr. George Smith recently made most extensive excavations in Assyria. He unearthed whole royal libraries from its mounds—libraries not consisting, like ours, of volumes of paper, but of clay tablets, which, while the clay was in a soft state, had been written upon with an iron pen, and then baked hard in an oven. Among these curious old volumes we find accounts of the Creation, of the Deluge, and of other events of sacred history, tintured, as we should naturally expect them to be, by the nature of the soil through which they have filtered, so that they do not correspond exactly with the Biblical narratives, but yet corresponding sufficiently to yield a most remarkable and most valuable corroboration of their testimony. We take up the Fifth Tablet, for instance. Here is a translation of seven lines of this strange volume from the library of King Assur-bani-pal, from which the reader may see that it is a kind of heathen Genesis:—

“ The moon he appointed to rule the night,  
And to wander through the night until the dawn of day.  
Every month without fail he made holy assembly days ;  
In the beginning of the month, at the rising of the night,  
It shot forth its horns to illuminate the heavens.  
On the seventh day he appointed a holy day,  
And to cease from all business he commanded.”

Our quotation is from the translation of Mr. H. Fox Talbot. Now, the date of this tablet is about 700 B.C. But Mr. Smith, of whose eminence as an Assyriologist

it is unnecessary to speak, says:—"The present copies of the Chaldean account of creation were written during the reign of Assur-bani-pal, B.C. 673-626. But they appear to be copies of much earlier accounts of Creation—works the date of the composition of which was probably near B.C. 2000. The legends, however, existed earlier than this, and were in the form of oral teaching." \* Thousands of years, therefore, before the Christian era, it appears that the Sabbath was known in Chaldea.

This is not the only Assyrian discovery which bears on our point. "In 1869," says Mr. Smith, "I discovered among other things a curious religious calendar of the Assyrians, in which every month is divided into four weeks, and the seventh days, or Sabbaths, are marked out as days on which no work should be undertaken." † What a remarkable testimony to the early knowledge of a Day of Rest!

More than this, Mr. Boscawen found the very name Sabbath, under the Accadian form Sabbattu. "Mr. Boscawen has pointed out to me," says Professor Sayce in the "Academy," "that it occurs in the form Sabbattu in W. A. I., ii. 32, 16, where it is explained as 'a day of rest for the heart.'" How significant this is! No wonder Mr. H. Fox Talbot prefaces his translation of the Fifth Tablet with this note—"The Fifth Tablet is very important, because it clearly affirms in my opinion that the origin of the Sabbath was coeval with Creation." Prof. Sayce has published a similar opinion, and our readers, exercising their own judgment even on the few passages which we have quoted, cannot, we think, but come to the same conclusion. It is a most important conclusion in the discussion of the subject before us. For, let it be noted that these traces of the

\* Trans. Soc. Bib. Archæol., Vol. IV., 363.

† Assyrian Discoveries, 12.

observance of the Sabbath being in existence so far back as the 7th century B.C., and the documents, from which the accounts of the Creation and of the institution of the Day of Rest have been translated, dating, in the opinion of the most eminent authorities, from about 2000 B.C., we are brought back to the days of Noah, who died, according to the common computation, in 1922 B.C. Further, as the Bible informs us that he lived 950 years, we reach through him to within a thousand years of the reputed origin of the Sabbath; a period long indeed, but which a single one of the marvellously protracted lives of those early patriarchs would suffice to bridge over. Adam himself, we are told, was 930 years old when he died, so that he could almost have related to Noah the story of the first Sabbath. His son Seth certainly could, and thus the knowledge of this wondrous institution could have been communicated almost directly to the men of the times with which these old Assyrian tablets connect us. How, we may ask, did they know of the sacred day, the same sacred day as is said in Genesis to have been hallowed, and whence did they derive their ideas of its sanctity, if the Sabbath of the Lord does not date from the Creation?

Passing over other traces of the knowledge of the Sabbath, let us go now to a land lying at a great distance from the original seat of the human family, and which possesses ancient and carefully kept annals reaching back into an almost unknown antiquity—China. The Rev. James Johnston, who resided in the Celestial Empire for some years, and who during his stay made himself well acquainted with Chinese institutions, says—"The antagonists of the primeval origin of the Sabbath have hitherto claimed China as a witness by her silence in their favour. They have justly and eloquently expatiated on the importance of such a witness. The undoubted antiquity of the nation



—the scrupulous fidelity with which her historic books and ancient literature are preserved—the care with which the calendar has been kept from a very remote date—her entire separation from all external influence, especially that of western nations—her autonomy, and tenacity of old customs, especially her own—these and many other reasons, make the testimony of Chinese history of great value in such a question. No man could suppose that China would borrow any institutions from Jews, Egyptians, or Arabian merchants, who have been erroneously regarded as the bearers of the planetary week from the plains of Chaldea, or, as Hesse says, from Egypt to Central India.”\*

Now the process of research into the Chinese calendar has yielded some most remarkable results, which must be found difficult of explanation by any one who denies or doubts the existence of a primeval Sabbath. Here, *e.g.*, is the account given, by the writer just quoted, of the funeral customs observed in China on the occasion of the death of a father. “In front, on a wooden tablet bearing the names and titles of the departed, incense tapers are lighted, and the children prostrate themselves before it every morning during the first *seven days*, and for the next *seven weeks*, on each *seventh day*, the same prostrations are performed morning and evening, with offerings to the departed spirit. In some cases of great devotion or display the daily prostrations are extended to *seven weeks*, and then the *seven times seven* weekly prostrations follow as in ordinary cases. This, to say the least of it, is in striking harmony with the patriarchal custom mentioned in Gen. iv. 10.”

Still more remarkable is the teaching of an astronomical table of great antiquity, which is published annually in China by Imperial authority, and is in

\* *Catholic Presbyterian*, 1881.

common use among the people. In this, "the heavens are divided into 28 constellations, a little on each side of the Zodiacal belt. There is a further division of this belt into four parts, each containing seven constellations. The central one of each seven is marked by the astronomical character for the sun, and this day is identical with our Lord's Day or Sunday."\* Surely a most curious and suggestive marking.

Another noticeable reference bearing on our point is furnished by what is called in China the *Book of Diagrams*, written in the 12th century B.C. In this book there is a passage which has been a puzzle to scholars for years. Of it there are no less than 1450 different renderings mentioned in the catalogue of the Imperial Library, and not one of the 1450 satisfies European linguists. It may seem absurd to build anything on a passage so dubious, but, while the exact translation is uncertain, the general drift of the words seems not so difficult of understanding. A distinguished scholar translates them thus, "Seven days complete a revolution." Another renders them, "On the 7th day the passages are closed." A pupil of the celebrated Dr. Morrison says, "In respect of the expression in the same book, 'The ancient kings ordered that on that day the gate of the great road should be shut, and traders not permitted to pass, nor the princes to go and examine the states,' it is plainly to be seen that in the times of the ancient kings, on the day of the Sabbath all classes kept at rest and observed it."†

Once more—in the *Imperial Almanac of China*, which is published annually at one of the government offices, the "Board of Rites," "there is a particular character found occurring throughout the year on every seventh day, and that day is our Christian

\* *Catholic Presbyterian*, 1881, p. 199.

† *Chinese Repository*.

Sabbath. The character employed is not found in common use. The meaning given to it in their dictionaries is 'secret' or 'closed.' How it first got there, or what it indicates in that position, no one can tell. It has been there from time immemorial."

Surely all this is most remarkable and at the same time most instructive. The question cannot but force itself on every thoughtful mind on reading of it—how did all this knowledge of seventh day sacredness penetrate into China? Is there any other explanation of it than that it was derived from the primeval institution of the Sabbath?

Again, that the ancient Egyptians had a week of seven days is admitted. But there is a curious fact not so generally known, viz., that at or before the commencement of the Christian era the Romans adopted the Egyptians symbols and names for the days of the week, only translating them into their own language and substituting their own deities for those of Egypt. Here is a remarkable table showing this, copied with slight alterations from a note on Dion Cassius by Reimarius. It speaks for itself.

SIGN.	ROMAN NAME.	EGYPTIAN NAME.	GREEK NAME.
☉	Sol.	Πιρη.	Ηλιος.
☾	Luna.	Πιος.	Σεληνη.
♂	Mars.	Μολοχ.	Αρης.
♀	Mercurius.	Πιερμης.	Ερμης.
♃	Jupiter.	Πιξευς.	Ζευς.
♀	Venus.	Σουροτ.	Αφροδιτη.
♄	Saturnus.	Ρηφαν.	Κρονος.

Once more, we give yet another table, showing how the Sanskrit days of the week, and their names, correspond in like manner with the Roman and our own—

SANSKRIT DAYS OF WEEK.	ROMAN DAYS OF WEEK.	ENGLISH DAYS OF WEEK.
Aditya-war.	Dies-Solis.	Sunday.
Soma-war.	Dies-Lunæ.	Monday.
Mangala-war.	Dies-Martis.	Tuesday, or day of Mars.
Budha-war.	Dies-Mercurii.	Wednesday, possibly day of Mercury.
Brahaspat-war.	Dies-Jovis.	Thursday, day of Jupiter.
Sucra-war.	Dies-Veneris.	Friday, day of Venus.
Shun-war.	Dies-Saturni.	Saturday, day of Saturn.

“Here,” says a late writer, “is an uncommonly curious and interesting series of facts. Not merely is there a division into weeks in various lands, the several days being named after the sun, moon, and planets, but, making allowance for difference of longitude, the Sunday of any one country has, it would appear, always fallen on precisely the same day with the Sunday of all others, and so with the remaining days. . . . The only opinion that seems really consistent with all the data is that which carries back the origin of the septenary division of time and the naming of the days to that remote period, when the Brahmins, the Persians, the Assyrians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Slavonic, Celtic, and Teutonic tribes, constituted one nation, somewhere about Persia or independent Tartary. As the Hindoos are believed to have entered India about seventeen centuries before Christ, we must suppose a yet more ancient date for the origin of septenary institutions among the united people.” \*

Enough has perhaps been said on this branch of the subject. It would be easy to adduce further evidence bearing in the same direction. But, while interesting,

\* *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, April, 1866.

it would only bear out further the conclusion at which the candid reader has doubtless already arrived in his own mind, viz., that the idea of the Sabbath instituted immediately after creation, was carried with them by the descendants of the first pair wherever they wandered, so that, amid all the dim lights of heathenism, and all the corruptions of idolatry, the primitive germ was never wholly lost. As the Scottish or North of Ireland emigrant carries with him across the Atlantic into Canada or the United States, and across the Indian Ocean to Australia and New Zealand, not only the old Bible in which he was nurtured at home, but the ecclesiastical and social customs amid which he grew up, and in many cases even transfers, with a touching patriotism, the local nomenclature of the scenes of his youth in the old country to his settlement in the new, so that on the prairies of the Great North-West, and in the States of New England, and the frontier towns of Australia, one hears the Psalms of David sung in the old rugged Scottish version to the old Scottish tunes, and finds himself, thousands of miles from home, still in a Belfast or a Coleraine, a Dunedin or a Perth, so, far as the children of the first pair strayed from their birthplace, no matter where their wandering feet found rest, they seem to have taken with them the memory, and the name, and the observance of the Sabbath of their youth, and till this day, shattered and overwhelmed as other institutions of their adopted homes have been, the Sabbath name survives, as the scent of rose-leaves clings to the fragments of the broken vase, to prove how indelibly it was inscribed at first upon the heart of man and upon the constitution of the world over which he was given dominion.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *A CURIOUS THEORY.*

**I**N 1833 a sermon was preached before the University of Cambridge by the Rev. Samuel Lee, D.D.,\* which propounded a somewhat remarkable theory of the Sabbath. In it he maintained that we keep the Sabbath now on the same day on which Adam and the patriarchs kept it—on the original day of its institution—that the seventh-day Sabbath, observed by the Jews, only dates from the Exodus—and, consequently, that at the Resurrection of Christ, when the day was changed, Christ and the Apostles merely reverted to the day of the original appointment. In 1868, the Rev. James Johnston, Glasgow, published a sermon,† advocating generally the same theory, and strengthening it by the results of various researches which he had made.

The following extracts may give some idea of the conclusions of these writers. “If,” says Lee, “the patriarchs actually kept a Sabbath day (which they must have done if the Bible can be relied on), then is it highly probable that they who first apostatised from them would continue to retain the same day, although

\* “The Duty of observing the Christian Sabbath enforced in a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge,” by Samuel Lee, D.D., Vicar of Banwell, and Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Cambridge. London, 1834.

† “The Primitive Sabbath restored by Christ, an historical argument derived from ancient records of China, Egypt, and other lands,” by the Rev. James Johnston, St. James’s Free Church, Glasgow. London, 1868.

their views might have undergone a change, and the rites observed have considerably varied.”\* “As the sun presented the most glorious body in the universe, and as its influences were the more sensibly felt, it was considered, and still is, in all heathen nations, the chief and prime minister of the one invisible and unapproachable God.”† . . . “It was customary to give names to . . . the days of the week . . . after one or other of their fabled deities, in all which we find the sun holding, under one title or other, the most conspicuous place. The names assigned, under this system to the several days of the week, may be traced up to the very earliest times of Egyptian, Chaldean and Persian history, whence it will appear, first, that the observance of weekly periods of seven days must have originally been derived from the Bible, perhaps as early as the patriarchal times, and secondly, that particular veneration would always be attached to that day which had been named after the sun, and which is the same with our Sunday. . . . There are therefore strong reasons for believing that the Sabbath Day of the patriarchs was celebrated on that particular day of the week which we now call Sunday, and also that the heathen took their day with all its observances from them, and further, that as nothing ever occurred which could have induced the heathen to interrupt the occurrence of this as the seventh day, its observance must have come down to us from times as ancient as those under which the first appointment of a Sabbath was kept.”‡ . . . “Everything peculiarly Jewish took its date and origin from the period of the egress. . . . There are strong grounds for believing that the first Jewish Sabbath was kept at Succoth, and that the fifteenth day of the month Abib was consecrated for

\* “The Duty of observing the Christian Sabbath,” p. 11.

† Ibid. p. 13.

‡ Ibid. p. 13.

the first time as a Sabbath for Jewish observance, principally to commemorate the period and the mercies of the deliverance from Egypt. But . . . when our Blessed Lord had led captivity captive, the whole Jewish ritual, and with it the Jewish Sabbaths, came to an end, and the primitive Sabbath, which had never been abrogated, obtained of right its original and universal character." \* Such is a conspectus, in a series of brief extracts, of the opinions broached in Dr. Lee's sermon. He expresses them, however, so badly, that it is at times difficult to follow his exact meaning.

Mr. Johnston's object in his pamphlet is cognate with that of Dr. Lee. Our Sabbath, he maintains, is kept on the same day as the primitive Sabbath. "Though really the seventh, it is appropriately called the first, being the first of the Jewish week, and was regarded as the first in most parts of the world." On these speculations we remark—

(1.) Their interesting nature must be acknowledged. Everything that concerns the history of the Holy Day is interesting. But the very idea that we now take our weekly rest on the self-same day on which the Creator had His, has about it something almost of fascination.

(2.) With the very laudable object which both writers had in view, in their researches, every lover of the Sabbath must sympathise. Their desire is to establish the Day on what they consider a firmer footing—to place it on the platform of primeval appointment, and so to do away with whatever difficulty may be supposed to be involved in the change of day made at the Resurrection of Our Lord. This last-mentioned difficulty is not, however, to our thinking, one to which much weight can be attached by the unbiassed inquirer. The "Lord of the Sabbath" can alter His own institu-

\* "The Duty of observing the Christian Sabbath," p. 16.



tion as He pleases. The essence of Sabbath law is the appropriation of one day in seven to Sabbath purposes. It is a matter of secondary importance which of the seven that day shall be. All that is required is a competent authority to set apart some one day. That authority we have in Jesus, as we shall find when we come to discuss the change of day further on.

(3.) It is difficult, however, to see how a Sabbath kept, as the Sabbath now is, upon the first day of the week can be said, as is argued by these authors, to be kept on the same day as the original Sabbath of the world, which was observed on the seventh day. No doubt Mr. Johnston says that the first day is only called the first day "in reckoning by Jewish notation"—that, though called the first, it is really the seventh. But this seems to us only to make matters more involved. Has a day been lost anywhere in the reckoning? Or how does it exactly come that the first day can be said to be really the seventh?

(4.) It is admitted by both authors that no evidence is forthcoming to *prove* their position. This is clear. It therefore remains a mere hypothesis, full of interest and curiosity, but with no claim to acceptance as an established truth.

(5.) The evidence adduced from Chinese and other Oriental annals and calendars as to the precise correspondence of the sacred day of certain Eastern nations with our present Sabbath is not conclusive. We know too little of the principle on which these annals have been kept in remote periods to be able to judge conclusively—(1) as to the precise synchronization, and (2) as to its cause, if proved. A distinction is to be drawn between the evidence for a septenary division of time in olden times and among various nations, and that for the observance of a particular day for thousands of years. The establishment of the former position is comparatively easy and has been accom-

plished. Who can tell what changes in modes of reckoning time—or what mistakes—or what lapse of reckoning altogether, may have occurred in the history of a remote and little known nation in the course of many centuries?

(6.) The theory, while confessedly proposed for the purpose of obviating a difficulty felt by some in regard to the change of day at the Resurrection, in reality substitutes two difficulties for one. It involves (1) a change of day at the Exodus, and (2) a second change at the Resurrection. Does it then in reality afford much help to the perplexed inquirer?

(7.) Dr. Lee's speculation as to there being "strong grounds for believing that the first Jewish Sabbath was kept at Succoth," is nothing more than a speculation, the "strong grounds for believing" it being wholly insufficient to produce anything approaching to conviction.

(8.) The hypothesis is not at all necessary to strengthen our proof for Sabbath observance. As a matter of historical inquiry, it is interesting. But the argument for the Sabbath really needs no such strengthening as it proposes to give it.

(9.) As an indication of the correctness of our remarks, it is worthy of note that none of our great Hebrew or Greek scholars, no noted authority in Jewish antiquities, and none of our distinguished theologians, have adopted the theory. Some of the Puritan divines of the seventeenth century, it is true, hint at some idea of the same kind, and Capellus, Archbishop Ussher, and Theophilus Gale, indulged in similar speculations. But our great authorities on such questions have hardly even noticed the theory.

(10.) The question occurs—is there not sometimes a danger in resting, or appearing to rest, a good case on evidence which is at the best doubtful? When an opponent has demolished the evidence adduced in sup-

port of the doubtful theory, he is apt to fancy, and to proclaim to the world, that he has overturned the whole edifice which that theory was formed to buttress up, and he may find men to believe that he has. We do not like to rest our arguments for the Sabbath on any dubious ground. In the strong Scriptural proofs adduced in the previous chapter of this essay, and in the others which are yet to be brought forward, we have ample, and more than ample, evidence for its authority—for its original institution—for its still continuing force. Such speculations as those with which we have just been dealing would not in our opinion add any strength to that evidence, even if they resulted less doubtfully than hitherto they have done, and therefore, at all events until they reach a more solid basis, we prefer standing in the old paths, and holding by those proofs of the Sabbath about which there can be no hesitation or question in the mind of any fair inquirer. What Bishop Horsley said of the theory, when advocated by Selden long ago, is what is likely to be said by all who will calmly investigate it: "It is in my judgment a mere conjecture, of which the Sacred History affords neither proof nor confutation."

## CHAPTER V.

### *THE SABBATH NOT A MERE JEWISH INSTITUTION.*

**N**O more impressive scene ever occurred on earth than that which took place on Sinai when God there gave the Law of the Ten Words. Let anyone study carefully the description of it in Exodus and he must feel himself, as he reads, in the very presence of God. Nothing that could lend impressiveness or solemnity to the occasion was wanting. The mountain trembled at the presence of its Maker—hoarse thunder crashed through the air, peal on peal,—lurid lightnings lit up the sky with an awful brilliance, but most dreadful of all was the voice of God as He spake “all these words.” The Monarch of the universe had come down to promulgate His laws in set form, and amid all the fitting surroundings of Divine royalty. Never more shall this earth behold such a scene until the Son of God comes again in the clouds of heaven to judge His people at the Last Day.

In the Law of the Ten Words occurs one statute bearing on the subject we are engaged in discussing—the memorable Fourth Commandment. The question now to be considered is this—for whom was that Decalogue, including of course that Fourth Commandment, intended? On whom is it binding—on all men, or on the Jews only? Is it a particular or a universal law? Have we all to do with it, or did its significance cease with the cessation of the Old Testament economy? Very solemn questions surely these are, which

no man desirous of knowing and doing the will of his Father who is in Heaven, can approach without the utmost anxiety. Let us look them in the face.

By some it is maintained that the Decalogue is entirely a Jewish compendium of law, and that, therefore, the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment is entirely a Jewish institution—that our Lord's Day is observed solely either (*a*) because the Church has sanctioned its observance, or (*b*) because our Lord and His Apostles kept it, or (*c*) that it is not to be kept at all in any manner different from other days, all days being required to be given by the Christian to the service of God.

On the other hand, the view of Protestant Christianity, as expressed in its leading symbols, is that the Decalogue is a comprehensive summary of the moral law, and as such is binding still, as it has always been binding, on all men, Jew and Gentile alike. All the great Churches, for example, which stand by the "Westminster Confession of Faith," hold this position. Chap. xix. of the "Confession" treats of "The Law of God," and tells us that "God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which He bound him and all his posterity, to personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience. . . . This law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness, and as such was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai in ten commandments, and written in two tables, the first four commandments containing our duty towards God, and the other six our duty to man. . . . The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof, and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator who gave it. Neither doth Christ in the Gospel anyway dissolve but much strengthen this obligation." Again in Chap. xxi. the "Confession" tells us that God "in His Word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all

ages, hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto Him."

The Anglican Church has shown the light in which it regards the Decalogue by embodying it in the "Book of Common Prayer." In the Communion Service, used every Sabbath, the minister is required to read the Ten Commandments, and, at the conclusion of each, the people are taught to say—"Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law," while at the end of the whole they are taught to pray—"Lord have mercy upon us, and write all these Thy laws upon our hearts, we beseech Thee." \*

There can be no doubt, therefore, as to the light in which these two Churches, which include within their pale the greater part of Protestant Christendom, regard either the whole Decalogue, or the particular commandment with which we are here specially concerned. Whatever individual members of the Churches may say or do, the position of the Churches, as such, is clear.

Even the Church of Rome transfers the Decalogue, including the Fourth Commandment (though in an abbreviated form), to her authorised catechisms. We shall deal further on with her audacious and unholy tampering with it. Here we only require to notice the fact that, however she may condemn and stultify herself by her neglect to carry out her own teaching, she adopts the Law of the Ten Words as her law.

Is it not at least a presumption in favour of the binding character of the Decalogue that this is thus the view of great communities of Christians, formally and solemnly expressed in their standards?

\* "This Sunday that we observe is not the commandment of men, as many say, that would, under the pretence of this one law, bind the Church of Christ to all other laws that they have ungodly prescribed unto the Church; but it is by express words commanded that we should observe the day (Sunday) for our Sabbath." *Early Writings of Bishop Hooper*, p. 342.

The law of the Sabbath is written, however, in more widely diffused documents than the creeds of any churches, however venerable. It is written on the "fleshy tables" of human hearts. There is an instinctive recognition there of the need of periodic rest from earthly toil, and there seem to be some by no means obscure indications that a seventh portion of time is the precise proportion required and demanded for this purpose, even by the laws of Nature. During the Reign of Terror in France an attempt was made to make every tenth day suffice for rest instead of every seventh, but the attempt was soon abandoned. It was found that it would not work.\* Eminent physicians, like Dr. John Richard Farre, tell us that, in addition to the nightly rest which the human frame requires to keep it in good working order, there is needed also some such provision as is made by the law of the Sabbath, and that if we persistently refuse to recognise and meet this need, we must inevitably suffer.† We are not surprised at this. It is precisely what we should expect. The promulgator of the Sabbath law being man's Creator, we should expect that the law written by Him within, on the mental and corporeal frame, and the law written without, on

\* "The keeping one whole day in seven holy, as a time of relaxation and refreshment, as well as for public worship, is of admirable service to a State, considered merely as a civil institution. It humanises, by the help of conversation and society, the manners of the lower classes, which would otherwise degenerate into a sordid ferocity and savage selfishness of spirit. It enables the industrious workman to pursue his occupation in the ensuing week with health and cheerfulness ; it imprints on the minds of the people that sense of their duty to God so necessary to make them good citizens, but which yet would be worn out and defaced by an unremitted continuance of labour without any stated times of recalling them to the worship of their Maker."—*Blackstone's Commentaries*.

† *Evidence taken before a Committee of the House of Commons, 1832.*

the two tables of stone, should exactly and entirely correspond. And it is even so.\*

Still, on the principles with which we set out in this essay, our appeal must be neither to the creeds of Churches, nor to the indications of the human constitution, but to the written law and testimony of God. That is the standard for all. What saith the Scripture? If men speak not according to this Word, verily there is no light in them.

(1.) We observe that much error has arisen on this subject from the confounding of "law" and "covenant." At Sinai God made a covenant with Israel, or, to speak with stricter correctness, He renewed the

\* "By way of illustration, let us suppose a few houses in the country are dependent for their water upon an open well, which is fed somewhat slowly. It is visited during the day by the inhabitants, and by night time the supply is low; but no demands being made upon it during the night, in the morning there is an accumulation of water nearly up to the measure of the beginning of the previous day. If it does not, however, gain completely during the night what it has lost during the day, it is plain that it will eventually be all but exhausted. Let us then further suppose that those dependent upon it, knowing this, find it expedient to give the well a periodical rest-day when they will leave it unvisited. The next day finds it full to the brim; and though day by day the supply diminishes a little, yet it will sustain all the demands made upon it until its next Sabbath. Now this is exactly the case with the human frame. If its working powers are to be kept in full and healthy exercise, it must enjoy not only its night's rest, but one day's rest in the seven. 'Although,' says Dr. Farre, 'the night apparently equalises the circulation, yet it does not sufficiently restore its balance for the attainment of a long life, hence one day in seven, by the bounty of Providence, is thrown in as a day of compensation to perfect by its repose the animal system.' This is not a guess, nor a speculation, but a palpable fact which men of the most opposite creeds, or of no creed, such as the eminent scientist Baron Von Humboldt, and the French socialist Proudhon, assert, and which is attested by every variety of experiment. The conviction of its truth has been forced upon men not willing to confess it, and to whose interest it seemed opposed."—*Rev. A. F. Douglas.*



covenant which He had made long previously with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That covenant He founded on His law, which, for clearer understanding, He formally recited in a summary form in the Decalogue. Now the Decalogue was not the covenant. It was its basis, not itself. God would have Israel to know the terms on which He would bless them and be their God. Those terms were—a kept law. That covenant with Israel is now abrogated. It is done away in Christ. But the abrogation of the covenant does not abrogate the law. That law existed before the covenant, and, as it had a separate and independent existence before it, so it has a separate and independent existence still, though the covenant no longer exists. God did not at Sinai construct the law for the first time. He simply re-stated, in plain, concise terms, a law which had all along, from the beginning, been in force, written on men's hearts, and, though now the Jewish covenant is no more, the law, which was not the covenant, but merely its basis, remains unaffected by its abrogation. The Rhone flows through the Lake of Geneva, and travellers marvel to see it flowing out again, as it flowed in, having preserved in some sort its character as a river all through. It had an independent course before ever it entered the lake, and it does not lose itself in it. It does not become part of the lake. It is the river still in the lake, and as it existed before it entered it, so it emerges from it again, still an independent existence. So is it with the Decalogue. Its laws, given at Sinai, were not new laws. They had existed from the creation of man. As a Decalogue they are embodied in the Israelitish covenant. But they emerge from their contact with that covenant unchanged—the same laws as ever—only put into compacter form, and bearing a more authoritative aspect, and, because so briefly and clearly stated, more binding than ever on men's hearts and

consciences—their breach more aggravatedly sinful, and their observance a more direct and intelligent act of homage to God, than when they came to man merely as the instinctive, unembodied monitions of His own moral nature. This distinction between law and covenant, if borne in mind, would save us from much confusion and error.

(2.) There was something in the circumstances of the giving of the law at Sinai which spoke of permanence. “God spake all these words.” What law, meant to be only transient in its operation, do we read of as being given in that manner? Further, when spoken, He wrote the words, not on papyrus, nor on parchment, but on the most enduring substance obtainable—on stone—symbol of permanency. Moreover, when so written, he directed them to be deposited within the Ark. That ark was the ark of the covenant, and in it they lay as the basis of the covenant, but, more than this, they lay there, as in the safest place of custody that could be found—in the very heart of hearts of the Tabernacle—symbol of the place they should have in the heart of man, in the heart of the Church, in the heart of the world. Is there no teaching in all this? Who shall say there is not?

(3.) Look now at the contents of the Decalogue. There is not a command in it which contains anything indicating it to be of a temporary nature. Not one. Here it may be convenient to make a slight digression, in order to say a word regarding a distinction which has been made—a useful distinction for our purpose—between laws which are moral and laws which are positive or ceremonial. “A moral law is one which has its foundation in the relationship of man to God, or in the relationship of man to man, or in the constitution of human nature itself. A ceremonial law is one which has its basis in the positive command of the Almighty and the propriety of which is justified by

the circumstances in which at a given time men may find themselves placed. A moral law is one which it is possible to discover by the light of nature, and the rightness of which at once commends itself to the reason and conscience of man. A ceremonial law cannot with certainty be known to be from God except by an oral or a written revelation. A moral law is commanded because it is right in itself, antecedent to all commands. A ceremonial law is right, simply because it is commanded. A moral law is a matter of permanent and universal obligation. A ceremonial law binds those persons only for whom it was intended, and even them it binds no longer than the purpose is served for which it was enacted. A moral law cannot be repealed. But, at any time the law-giver pleases, a ceremonial law may be set aside. The distinction will be best understood by a familiar example. As a specimen of a moral law we may name the duty of loving our parents. To those from whom we derive existence we stand in a peculiar relationship. Nature and conscience prompt us to repay them with affection. Had the Bible never been written, it would be no less the duty of a man to love his father and mother. . . . But the same thing could not be said, for example, of that ancient law which forbade a Jew to eat pork. That is strictly a ceremonial law. Unlike the other, it has no foundation in the relationship of a man to his fellowmen."\*

Go now through the Ten Commandments and see whether one of them belongs to the latter category, or whether, on the contrary, there is one which is not plainly of the former. Take the First. Under which head are we to write the words—"Thou shalt have no

\* "The Sabbath not a Church Holiday, but a Divine Ordinance under all Dispensations." By the Rev. Thomas Witherow, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Magee College, Londonderry. Belfast, 1871.

other gods before me?" What race or nation on earth can claim exemption from that law? What age of man's history has not been subject to its operation? Nay, what rank of the heavenly intelligences themselves is not bound by it? That commandment has its foundation in the very fact that God is God, and can never be repealed. It can never at any time be right to have any God but God, or to give to any other the worship and glory which are due to Him alone. What man will dare to say that this command is abrogated? What man will dare to say that it ever can be abrogated?

Take the Second. It forbids all image-worship. Is it Jews only that need that law—Jews only that can violate it—Jews only that are bound to keep it? Is it binding upon no one unless he has been brought out of the land of Egypt—out of the house of bondage? Where there is no law, there can be no transgression. Where this law is not in force, there can be no idolatry. Who shall say that it is so? Who shall dare to go to the teeming realms of heathendom, and, standing in the idol-temple, and seeing the gods many and lords many which receive the homage of the ignorant worshippers, proclaim that this law is abrogated?

Go to the Third—"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Is that a commandment which it was ever right to break—which it ever can be right to break? Is it not a law binding in heaven, on earth, binding for all time and all eternity? Who shall say that it is abrogated? Who shall say that it can be or ought to be?

We now come to the Fourth Commandment, with which we are specially concerned. Note that we only reach it now. As if the great Legislator had foreseen the attempts which would be made to get rid of it, it is entrenched in the very heart of the Decalogue, so that one must get rid of Monotheism, must deny the

permanence of the prohibition of image-worship, must admit that the law against the profanation of the Creator's name is abrogated, before he can plead for the repeal of the Sabbath law. Or, if he approach it from behind, he must get rid of the Divine prohibitions of injuries to man's person, property, and character, and must weaken the defences of all virtue, before he can lay a finger on the law of the Day of Rest. Is this remarkable position an accident? Has this law been put in its place at random? And has God inserted a temporary law along with a body of others which are admitted to be permanent? Is the Fourth an exception to all the rest of the Commandments? How does it come that it is in a code, every other provision of which is admitted to be obligatory, if it alone has lost its force and its authority? There is here a crux which it will be difficult indeed for any sophistry to get over.\*

Looking more closely at the commandment, who shall say that in its main features and in the duties which it inculcates, the fourth is not as plainly a permanent ordinance as any of the other nine? If God alone is to be worshipped—if that worship is not to be ordered after man's own devices but according to His will—if it is to be a reverent and holy worship, must there not be a time set apart for it? Does not the law written on our hearts tell us that there should be. More than that, does not the same law tell us that God has the right, if He so pleases, to fix the amount of that portion, and that, where He fixes it, it is our duty to obey His command? What is there in all this of a merely Jewish character?

But it may be said—it has been said—"We do not deny all this. We do not question the permanent obligation of all the precepts now enunciated. What we

\* It is worthy of notice that the Fourth Commandment occupies nearly one third of the entire space taken up by the Decalogue.

deny is that they have this permanent obligation because they are contained in the Decalogue. Any law in the Decalogue which is not contained somewhere in the New Testament we refuse to acknowledge. Before that authority and that authority alone we will bow." The motto of Protestantism used to be—"The Bible, and the Bible only is the religion of Protestants." But it seems that some people have now narrowed their faith to less than half of the Holy Book. Be it so. We are ready to meet them on their own ground. For we submit that the whole Decalogue is recognised in the New Testament as binding. We open the book at Mat. xix. 17. We find there an account of a young man who comes to Christ seeking guidance. How does He direct him? He points him to the Decalogue. He says—"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments." The young man, desiring certainty as to the Great Teacher's exact meaning, says, "which" commandments? Our Lord, in reply, recites to him several specimen commandments of the Decalogue, in the very words of the Decalogue. That does not look very like the abrogation of the Ten Commandments. Or we go to the Sermon on the Mount, that incomparable piece of teaching, which those who oppose us on this question are never weary of telling us breathes the true spirit of New Testament Christianity. What does the Master say there regarding this question? Let us hear Him. "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law . . . I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot (one *yod*, a small letter of the Hebrew alphabet) or one tittle (one *keraiia*, a minute turn of a letter in the same alphabet) shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled." That does not look very like the abrogation of the Law surely. But He says more. "Whosoever shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach men so (the command-

ments of this Law of the Old Testament), he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." That does not look very like the repeal of the Commandments surely. Nor is this all. He proceeds to quote some of the commandments of the Decalogue, in the very words of the Decalogue, shedding new light upon them, till they shine and glow with His own spirit. Any one can read all this for himself in Mat. v. 17, etc. It is marvellous that any man can do so and still say that the Decalogue is abolished, or that we have nothing to do with it in New Testament times.

From the personal teaching of our Lord regarding the Decalogue we pass to that of His Apostles. First of all let us hear what the great Apostle of the Gentiles has to say on the matter. We open at Rom. xiii. 8, and we find him quoting several of the Commandments. Does he say we have nothing to do with them?—that they are out of date?—that we have outgrown them? Nothing of the kind. He tells us in effect, as any one may see for himself by consulting the passage, that we have still to keep them, and he shows us how. In Ephes. vi. 2, he quotes one of them again, the fifth, calls it a commandment, and urges obedience to it. St. Paul evidently had the most thorough belief in the binding force of the Decalogue.

We go next to the Apostle James. In his Epistle (ii. 10,) he speaks of "the law," and he leaves us in no doubt as to what law he means. He quotes the laws of the Decalogue, in the very words of the Decalogue. Not a hint of those laws having become obsolete! Quite the contrary—an enforcement of them, and an explanation of them as still binding. "Whosoever," he says, "shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said 'Do not commit adultery,' said also 'Do not kill.' Now if thou

commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." St. James had obviously no idea of the abrogation or abolition of the Decalogue.

This is the teaching of the New Testament. We challenge any one to show one solitary statement from it in a contrary direction. There is no such statement. If we submit to its authority, there can be no question that the law of the Ten words is still a law for us.

"Oh! but," it is argued, "is it not said, 'We are not under the law but under grace?' How does that statement consist with the doctrine you are now laying down?" Now it has been well said, "The meaning of the Bible is the Bible." What then is the meaning of this oft-quoted text? It cannot possibly mean that Christians have no concern nor connection with the Decalogue, and unless it means this, its quotation in the present connection is useless. But that it cannot mean this, is clear. Apostles would not cite the commandments of the Decalogue, and comment on them, and enforce them, as they have done, if we had no concern with them. They would not stultify themselves by contradicting their own teaching. If any one will attentively consider the whole of the passage in which the words now referred to occur, he will see their true meaning at once, and will never employ them again to support the dogma of the abolition of the Decalogue. They mean that we are not under the law as "a covenant of works." No salvation is attainable by the law. By its deeds "shall no flesh living be justified." But that is a very different thing from saying that we have nothing to do with it. It is a rule of life, as the apostles are careful to remind us over and over again, and that is precisely the point we are contending for. A child is not a slave. But the child does not differ from the slave in this—that the one is under law and the other not. The child is bound to obey its father just as much as the servant.



The motives of obedience in the two cases and the spirit of obedience may be different; but both must obey. The Christian is a child of God. Is he therefore absolved from obeying his Father? To ask that question is to answer it.

But it is sometimes argued, again, that it is inconsistent with the freedom and spirituality of the New Economy that we should be trammelled by this Decalogue. Love, not law, reigns now, we are told. We are "called unto liberty."

This notion, however, proceeds on entirely false views of what liberty really is. Liberty is not freedom from the control of law. That is license, not liberty, as John Milton long ago pointed out. True liberty, instead of resenting the presence of law, demands and rejoices in it. The free peoples of the world are the law-abiding peoples. The truth is—in all God's dominions law rules. In the physical world and the spiritual alike we find the "reign of law." Whether or not, as Professor Drummond argues, natural law reigns in the spiritual world, law of some kind certainly does. Law is the government of God, and there is no part of creation exempt from that government. To use Jonathan Edwards's strong expression, it would be to "ungod God" to believe so.

Some have thoughtlessly drawn an argument against the present binding nature of the Decalogue from the words of its Preface:—"I am the Lord thy God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." They say, "We were never in either the land of Egypt or the house of bondage—what therefore can we have to do with a law which begins thus?" Now this argument either proves too much or too little. If the Commandments bind none but those literally brought up out of Egypt, then they did not bind even all the Jews, but only the generation of the Exodus. But if they bind all Israel, then if St.

Paul argues correctly, Christians are of the true Israel. "We are the circumcision," he says. Let any one read his argument on this subject in the Epistle to the Romans, and he must see that we in this economy are identified with the Jews in a very real manner—that we are now before God the true Israel, and any argument, therefore, which is brought against the Commandments, on the ground of the Jewish cast of the Preface, recoils on those who use it.

To only one other argument on this part of the subject do we deem it necessary to allude. It is said that Christ, having by His atoning work satisfied the law of God—that law is gone, for us, for ever. The text is quoted—"Having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us." Now this argument is simply based on a confusion of thought. Suffering the penalty of a law does not surely abolish that law. Nor does perfect obedience. But these two things constitute what Christ did. He rendered a perfect obedience to the law and He bore for His people its utmost penalty. Neither of these two works of His, nor both of them together, amount to anything like the abolition of the law. When a criminal suffers on the scaffold, that means something very different from the abolition of the law against which he has offended. It surely means the exact contrary. It manifests the strength of the law. No doubt Christ has "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us and has taken it out of the way, nailing it to His cross." The reference in this fine passage is to the practice in Palestine, of a creditor, when his debt was discharged, driving a nail through the bond, to signify that it was cancelled. Christ has done that. The ransom has been paid *for* us and is not to be paid over again *by* us. But that act of His only "magnifies the law and makes it honourable," and just in proportion as we appreciate the greatness of the Re-

deemer's work and enter into its spirit, will we like Him continually honour the law of God in our hearts and lives, not saying that we will have nothing to do with it, but following in His footsteps in this as in all things, and striving to uphold it to the best of our power. \*

The truth of the matter regarding the Decalogue is simply this—not only has it not been repealed, but it could not be. The laws contained in it were in existence before it was promulgated, and they shall be in existence till this world comes to an end. “You could not make a grosser mistake than to suppose that the moral law was given to the world for the first time only when, upon the summit of the burning mount, the tables of stone were marked by the finger of God. Then for the first time the law was committed to writing; but the law was in existence and men were subject to it ages before it found expression upon the tables of stone. Where men are not under law it is of course impossible to break law. ‘Where there is no law there is no transgression.’ But no man who reads the Scriptures can fail to observe that from Adam to Moses there was transgression enough. That the law was then broken and that men were punished for breaking it proves that the law then existed. Did not Reuben break a law when he ‘went up to his father’s bed?’ Did not the sons of Jacob break a law when they hated their brother and sold him for a slave? Did not Rachel break a law when she stole her father’s images? Did not the progenitors of Abraham break a law when they served their idols on the other side of the flood? Did not Cain break a law when he committed murder? It is obvious that it was not the Law of Moses which these persons broke, for at the time the latest of them sinned God had not yet spoken from Mount Sinai and Moses was not born. What law did they then break? The

answer is evident—they broke that moral law which God had stamped on the human heart in Paradise, which, though to some extent defaced by the fall, is still discernible by the light of nature, and which till this hour would not relax its claim upon the human race even though Sinai had never thundered and Moses had never spoken and no Jew had ever been heard of in the world.” \*

No doubt we read the Ten Commandments now in New Testament light, and read into them a New Testament spirit. We do not stand trembling before “the mount that might be touched and that burned with fire.” Calvary, rising over against Sinai, has transfigured it. We look upon God’s laws not as our foes but as our friends, and upon Himself, not as a hard taskmaster, but as a loving Father. But, nevertheless, we do not alter one of those laws. We dare not. Rome, usurping the prerogative of Deity, omits and changes to suit her purposes. We shudder at her audacity. Yet which is worse—the high-handed daring which lifts one of those Divine precepts out of the place which God has assigned to it, or the casuistry which at one fell swoop blots them all out of the Christian statute-book altogether?

Turning now again specially to that Fourth Commandment with which we are here specially concerned, we admit at once that, like all the other nine, it is cast in a Judaic mould. The Commandments at Sinai were promulgated primarily to Jews, through a Jewish mediator, and just as a river is tinged by the soil through which it flows, so is the Decalogue. But in saying this we only say what is true of the whole Christian religion. It had a Jewish origin. It arose in Palestine. The New Testament is the development of the Old Testament, as the Old Testament is the root of the New. Christ was a Jew according to the flesh,

\* Witherow, *ut supra*.

and by Jews the holy oracles were written. Jerusalem is "the mother of us all," and has left its mark upon the whole Christian Church. If we are therefore to discard the Fourth Commandment, or any other commandment, because it wears a certain Judaic aspect, we must discard more than the Decalogue. We will not have much of the Bible, nor much of Christianity left.

But, while cast in this Jewish mould, a calm and unbiassed consideration of the Fourth Commandment will fail to discover anything in it which should confine it to Jews. Let us go through it, and see for ourselves. "Remember"—that very first word takes the reader back to antecedent times when no distinction between Jew and Gentile yet existed, and reminds him that he is not listening to the promulgation of a new law, but to the republication of an old one given long before to the whole of mankind. "The Sabbath Day"—not the seventh day, but the Sabbath Day—the Rest-Day. There is no specification of the precise day to be kept. Room is left for a change of day. The commandment only says—Remember the Rest-Day. "To keep it holy."—Some incautious critics have said that the Fourth Commandment merely prescribes rest—not worship. They have surely forgotten these words. It is a *holy* resting that the law of the day requires—not a mere indolent relaxation of mind or body, but a rest that has reference to God. "Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work." There is nothing distinctively Jewish here, is there? Part of the primal curse pronounced on the common father of us all was that in the sweat of his face he should eat bread; and the law of the New Testament is, "He that will not work neither should he eat." "But the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." "Ah!" cries a captious critic, "there is what shows it to be a Jewish precept—the seventh-day Sabbath. How can you ask us to keep the first day on the authority of a

commandment which expressly prescribes the keeping of the seventh?" But stop a moment. The commandment does *not* order the keeping of the seventh day of the week, or any particular day of the week. Let us note what it does order, for its words are like all the words of God, precise and well-chosen. It says that we are to spend six days in our worldly employments, and the seventh day (not of the week, but the day following the six of work) in holy rest. Is not this precisely what the Christian does as well as the Jew? Does he not labour six days and rest the seventh? And that is what the Commandment enacts. "In it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son nor thy daughter." This strict prohibition, we are told, is no longer binding. The Jew was forbidden to do any work whatever on the Sabbath—even to light a fire. But we are not under that obligation. Certainly not. The Commandment says nothing about the lighting or not lighting of Sabbath fires, and our Lord explains to us that even the Jews had the fullest liberty under the Commandment to perform all works of necessity and mercy upon the Sabbath, so that there is no difference between our position and theirs in that respect. "Nor the stranger that is within thy gates." This clause, it will be observed, expressly extends the obligations of the Commandment beyond Jews to Gentiles. "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day and hallowed it." Is it a Jew only that has reason to remember the work of creation? Is it upon the Jews only that the example of the Great Father of all is to be influential? Surely not. Surely these words take us all in, Jew and Gentile alike. They take us back again to the original institution of the Sabbath—to the original reasons for its institution—to that blessing which hallowed it in the world's

earliest age, long before Abraham's day. From the beginning of the Commandment to the end, therefore, there is not a word necessarily or only Jewish. The word "Jew" does not once occur in it, nor can we find anything in its entire contents which gives the faintest hint that it was intended to be restricted to Jews. Quite the contrary.

Dr. Norman Macleod, defending his peculiar views on the Sabbath before the Presbytery of Glasgow in 1865, said that the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment was "from evening to evening," beginning upon what we should call the Friday evening and ending on the Saturday evening. But the Commandment says nothing of the kind, and implies nothing of the kind—says nothing whatever as to either the day of the week or the hours of the day during which it is to be kept. Its wisdom is very apparent just here. It leaves scope for the change of day which came in at the Resurrection of Christ, and it leaves scope too for different countries which have different calendars and different modes of reckoning time. In Iceland, Sunday is reckoned from six o'clock in the evening till six o'clock the next evening. In Russia, for ecclesiastical purposes, the same rule is observed. We, on the other hand, reckon Sunday, as we do any other day, from midnight to midnight. The commandment has nothing whatever to say to all this. It says—Give God one day out of the seven, the seventh after six of work—an entire day of the same length as your other days. That is all. Again, Dr. Macleod argued that those Christians who keep the Fourth Commandment could only keep it "in spirit." We do not hesitate to say that there is not a solitary precept of it which the Christian may not observe to the very letter. The fact that men in some places have gone to an undue extreme of strictness in Sabbath keeping no more proves the Jewish character of the Commandment than the far more com-

mon extreme of undue laxity in its observance proves its laxity. What we have to do with is not men's observance of it, but itself. The Commandment is not to be judged by men's observance, but men's observance by the Commandment.

Mr. Herbert Spencer has also stigmatised our keeping of the Fourth Commandment as Jewish. In his "Study of Sociology," imagining what may be said of our age "by an independent observer living in the far future, supposing his statements translated into our cumbrous language," he observes: "'In some respects,' says the future observer, 'their code of conduct seems not to have advanced beyond, but to have gone back from, the code of a still more ancient people from whom their creed was derived. . . . The relations of their creed to the creed of this ancient people are indeed difficult to understand. . . . Not only did they in the law of retaliation outdo the Jews, instead of obeying the quite opposite principle of the teacher they worshipped as Divine, but they obeyed the Jewish law and disobeyed their Divine teacher in other ways—as in the rigid observance of every seventh day, which he had deliberately discountenanced. . . . Their substantial adhesion to the creed they professedly repudiated was clearly demonstrated by this, that in each of their temples they fixed up in some conspicuous place the Ten Commandments of the Jewish religion, while they rarely, if ever, fixed up the two Christian commandments given instead of them.'"

\* Surely this is a most extraordinary passage. Whatever it fails to prove, most certainly it makes clear to us that theology is not Mr. Spencer's forte. We are here concerned only with his reference to the Fourth Commandment, which simply proves that he knows nothing whatever about the subject. We have shown above, that Sabbath observance is no more a Jewish institution than

\* "The Study of Sociology."



honesty or purity, which, we trust, Mr. Spencer does not regard as virtues only to be practised by the children of Abraham. Perhaps, the most extraordinary part of his statement is that in which he declares that our Lord "deliberately discountenanced" the observance of the Sabbath. The exact contrary is the fact. In nothing was he more careful than in observing it and in showing the correct manner of observing it. There was something in connection with it which he did "deliberately discountenance"—the Rabbinical perversions of its spirit and law which, as He showed the Jews, were not only contrary to the teaching of their own old Testament, but contrary to common sense and common humanity. But as to the Sabbath itself, when we read the biographies of Jesus, when we find Him attending public worship regularly on the Sabbath, using the day purposely for so many of His works of mercy, and taking pains to vindicate the true law of the day, and clear it of the accretions which in His time so entirely obscured its meaning and purpose, and made it a burden instead of a blessing, we can only be surprised at any writer making the statement that Christ "deliberately discountenanced" the observance of every seventh day. One might say with about as much truth that Mr. Herbert Spencer has "deliberately discountenanced" the study of philosophy. We are not surprised, after reading the statement we have referred to, to hear next that Christ gave us two Christian commandments instead of the Ten. No assertion could be further from the truth. Our Lord never gave any commandments instead of the Decalogue, simply for this reason, that He never superseded the Decalogue, but on the contrary, enforced it and emphasised its permanence. The two commandments which He gave, He gave not as substitutes for, but as summaries of, the Ten. He expressly said: "*All the law is fulfilled*" in these two laws. Mr. Spencer's

sneer at English Christianity need not trouble us much. It no doubt pleases him and it does it no harm. It is merely the scoff of one who shows that he has not succeeded in even understanding the question of which he writes.

Oh no! The Sabbath was no mere Jewish institution. The Jew needed it. But so does the Gentile, and God, mindful of the universal needs of His creatures, made the Sabbath for *man*. First established immediately after his creation—solemnly re-acted in the Decalogue, which is a summary of the entire moral law—carefully cleansed by the Saviour from the defilements which had come to obscure its light and mar its beauty—it has been handed on to us, who, in the anxious competition of our business affairs, and the bustle and feverish haste of our modern life, need it more than ever age that the world has yet seen, and who will be indeed “fools and slow of heart” to perceive our own best interests, as well as untrue to the God who has bestowed on us such a precious boon, if we do not still “Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.”

## CHAPTER VI.

### *THE DECALOGUE AND THE SABBATH.*

**I**N the Decalogue, we have a series of laws for the regulation of man's life. Let us inquire in this chapter how the law of the Sabbath stands among them and in what manner it is related to them. Notice—

(1.) First, it is in the Decalogue. It is unquestionably one of the Ten Laws that the Sabbath day is to be remembered and kept holy. I submit that, being there, it must stand or fall with the others, and they with it. You cannot begin to pick and choose among these Ten Laws, taking which of them you like, and consigning to oblivion any which do not precisely harmonise with your ideas. You cannot retain the first three, saying, "these commend themselves to me and I will have them and obey them;" and then, when you come to the fourth, say, "Here is one which stands on a different basis, I will have none of it." The Decalogue is a unity. To eliminate one law from it is to lose all. To admit one is to admit all. Change the case. Let it be a question not of divine, but of human, legislation. Are you at liberty to say, "I will submit to some of the laws of this empire, but others I will have nothing to do with?" You know you cannot. Being a subject of the Queen, you are bound by all the laws which, in conjunction with the other estates of the realm, she imposes. Can we treat the Supreme Government of all otherwise? The Sabbath law is one of a string of ten precious pearls, threaded to-

gether by a Divine hand—"orient pearls," but not "at random strung." Before you detach one of them from the rest you must cut the string and endanger all. God has joined these ten together. What man shall dare to put them asunder? \*

(2.) The position of the Fourth Commandment in the Decalogue is worthy of notice. This position is not a matter of chance. There can be no chance about any arrangement which God makes. He does nothing at random, we may be sure. He is the Author of the order in which He places events or commands, just as much as He is the Author of the events or commands themselves. That order, we may be certain, is an intended order, and must be the best order that is possible. Now, the order in which the law of the Sabbath comes in among the rest is remarkable. It does not stand at the end of the Decalogue, else the suggestion might possibly occur to a suspicious mind, or one that did not desire to be under its yoke, that it had got added on by mistake. It does not stand at the beginning. If it did, the same suspicion might have arisen regarding its origin. Nor yet do we find it precisely occupying the central position in the code, else restless minds, once they had begun to doubt its validity and to desire to get rid of its authority, might have suggested the theory that a Jewish legislator had, with most exact calculation, estimated what was the safest place in which to deposit a spurious law, and put it

\* The late Dr. Lockhart, of Glasgow, when travelling in England, was sojourning at an inn when the Sabbath came round. On entering the public room, and about to set out for church, he found two gentlemen preparing for a game of chess. He addressed them to this effect:—"Gentlemen, have you locked up your portmanteaus carefully?" "What! are there thieves in this house?" "I do not say that," replied the doctor, "only I was thinking that if the waiter comes in and finds you making free with the *fourth* commandment, he may think of making free with the *eighth*."

there. It stands in a position really stronger than any of them. You must pass over and get rid of three most solemn and holy laws before you can reach it from the beginning of the Decalogue. You must get rid of six most salutary and necessary laws before you can reach it from the end. In front of it, like three strong and stalwart sentries, stand the First, and the Second, and the Third Commandments. You must deal with them before you can touch it. At its back stands a rear-guard of six other laws. If you wish to attack it from behind you must first deal with them. There it lies entrenched in the heart of those ten laws, as in a camp, with nine stout and watchful sentinels keeping every point of attack. Like the donjon-keep in the Norman fortress, it holds the key of the position. Like the keystone of an arch, it is buttressed up on either side by well-chosen and well-fitted stones, and itself, while supported by them, giving them in return their strength. Is there no teaching in all this? Was it all undesigned? Has it all come by chance? If we were dealing with a work of man we might say so. But this is a work of God, who knows the end from the beginning, and disposes, with the utmost exactness, of the lot which men cast at random into the lap. Who shall say either that He gave this position by chance or that it has no meaning and no purpose? \*

(3.) Notice again the relations of this Commandment to the others, and theirs to it. It might have happened that the Ten Laws should have had no mutual connection or relation. They might have been ten

\* "As the original concrete foundation of the great Washington monument was found to be too weak to hold the whole monument and had to be replaced by rock, so we must put under our Sabbath observance the granite of Sinai, the perpetual and universal obligation of the Fourth Commandment, for nothing weaker can stand the pressure of our Nineteenth Century temptations to Sabbath desecration."—*Rev. W. F. Crafts, D.D.*

separate and distinct decrees, with no further affinity to each other than that all were in the one code and the work of one Author. But it is not so. When we come to look at them, we find that they grow out of and fit into each other in the most beautiful manner. They are ten fruitful branches, springing from one trunk with one common root. Or, like the ten fingers of the human hands, they are formed of the same substance, animated by the same vitality, and feel the beatings of the one great Heart.

Let us see how this is. Looking at the Decalogue as a whole, we find that it has two aspects—a God-ward and a man-ward. A complete law for man evidently must possess this two-fold character. No man can be right who is not right in both ways, who does not maintain a conscience void of offence both toward God on the one hand, and toward man, on the other. Take the First Table, which teaches our duty to God. It has in it four laws. The first tells us whom we are to worship, the second and third how we are to worship, the fourth when. The first warns us against polytheism, the second against the sin of idolatry, the third against the sin of profanity, the fourth against the sin of relegating to any time (which might prove to be no time) the duty of adoring the Creator. In the first, God points the worshipper to Himself and demands his homage in opposition to the gods many and lords many of heathenism—in the second He warns him against the sinful practices of those who will only worship when they have a visible representation of their deity—in the third He bids him guard against the corruption into which all mere human worship has a tendency to degenerate, the corruption of mere vain repetition—in the fourth He bids him set apart for his worship a time, lest it should sink into a mere vapid, and general, and indefinite thing. There is thus a great unity in this table. You cannot

displace one of its laws without marring the completeness of the whole. By so much as you interfere with one of them, you spoil the beauty of a piece of legislation, the equal of which the world has never seen, which left God's hand, like all his works, "perfect and entire, wanting nothing." \*

Just in the same way, we might show how the six several laws of the Second Table are in like manner mutually related, and stand or fall together. It would be equally easy to illustrate how the Second Table is related to the First, duty to God involving and implying the performance of duty to man, and *vice versâ*, so that the two revolve round and support each other like binary stars. In addition, it would be specially suitable here to show how the Fourth Commandment, in particular, has a marvellous connection with the requirements of the Second Table, there being hardly a sin prohibited there which has not been proved by actual experience to be associated with Sabbath-breaking. But all this is scarcely necessary. A hint regarding it may be sufficient.

There are people who would stand aghast at the

\* A boatman, whose Christian master had required him to work on the Sabbath, and who had been therefore unrestrained in his vicious tendencies, in his dying moments said to his master, who, at that late hour, sought to speak to him about religion: "You forced me to break one of God's commandments, and when I broke one I thought there was no use in trying to keep the others." Another incident for Sabbath-breaking employers to ponder is the following: The crew of an American vessel in harbour was ordered by the captain to labour on the Sabbath in preparation for a voyage. They refused, assigning as a reason their right to rest on the Sabbath while in the harbour, and to attend to the appropriate duties of that day. The captain dismissed them and attempted to procure another crew. He applied to several, who refused. He then met an old sailor and asked him if he would ship. "No!" "Why not?" "Because a man who will rob the Almighty of His day, I should be afraid would rob me of my wages."

very idea of violating any other of the Commandments who look very lightly on a breach of the Fourth. Hint to them the very possibility of their stealing, or lying, or breaking the Seventh Commandment, and they feel insulted at the bare suspicion of such a possibility. But the Fourth has no such sanctity in their eyes. Why? Who made it to differ from God's other laws? By whose authority do we place it in a lower position than the rest? Certainly not by God's. There is no hint, either in itself or anywhere else, to show that He pays less respect to it than to the other nine, or lays less stress upon it. On the contrary, it might be argued that He has a special and particular regard for it. His dealings with Israel showed that He was very jealous of any breach of it. It is worth remembering that the whole of Palestine to-day stands out before the world as a monument of the consequences of the breach of the law of the Sabbath. In Levit. xxvi. God says to Israel, "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord." Promises of blessing, if this commandment is obeyed, are then given.\* Then the chapter proceeds—"If ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary to me, then I will walk contrary to you also in my fury, and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins . . . and I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you, and your land shall be desolate and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate and ye be in your enemies' land, even then shall the land rest and enjoy her Sabbaths—as long as it lieth desolate it

\* It is proved by statistics that Jews on the Continent have an average of ten years longer life than other races. Mr. Jacobs, in a paper read before the Anthropological Institute, attributes their greater longevity in large degree to the observance of a weekly Sabbath. *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xv. 29, 33.



shall rest, because it did not rest in your Sabbaths when ye dwelt upon it." Every traveller, therefore, who visits Palestine and brings back to us the descriptions of its dreary ruins, of the broken-down terraces on its hill-sides, of its deserted villages and general desolation, with which we are so familiar, is a witness, consciously or unconsciously, to the love which God has for a faithfully kept Sabbath, and to the danger which men and nations incur when they think lightly of Sabbath law. The very fact that the Fourth Commandment seems to the uninstructed mind of less moment than some other precepts of the Decalogue, and the breach of it a less heinous sin than the breach of others, makes it in some sort a superior test of the spirit of obedience. Is not a command, whose supreme importance and necessity we cannot see as plainly as we do those of others, a better test of our allegiance to God than others whose necessity and importance are written on their faces? To our first parents the eating or not eating of the Forbidden Fruit appeared a light matter. The reason of the prohibition was not plain to them. No reason for it was given by God. They were to obey Him, simply because He bade them. On that very account the command was a better test of their character and obedience than one, the intrinsic goodness and the evil consequences of disobeying which would have been more apparent. So with this Fourth Commandment. It may seem to us a matter of smaller moment whether we keep or break it, than whether we keep or break some of the others. But this very fact that its importance and advantages may not be so immediately and conspicuously clear to us, in reality renders it a more solemn and searching test of our loyalty to our great King. There is a special warning in Scripture against him who shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, which ought to be well pon-

dered by all who, weighing the Ten Words in their imperfect balances, come to the conclusion that, if they keep the other nine, they may safely disregard this.

We are very far from saying, however, that this commandment is of secondary importance. We therefore notice—

(4.) The character of the Fourth Commandment. The Decalogue begins with three precepts, intended to regulate the homage to be paid to the Divine Being. The last six of its statutes, again, are meant to regulate the duties which we owe to our fellow human beings. Between these two classes of commands comes in the one which we are considering, and it will be observed that it partakes of the character of both. It is a commandment which prescribes a duty which we owe to God. But there is a secular element in it as well as a sacred, for it not only bids us to rest on the Sabbath, but to work on the other six days of the week. "Six days shalt thou labour" is a portion of the law as binding as "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Therefore this commandment occupies the position of a sort of connecting link between the two tables. This gives it a peculiar strength. It is not an altogether sacred command, nor yet is it altogether secular. It is both. It is a law for the Day of Rest; but it is also a law for the day of labour. That man violates it who profanes the Sabbath day. But he violates it too who fritters away the week day. It is a law for all our time, and he who would get rid of the Sabbath must not only remove this commandment out of its strong position in the heart of the Decalogue, but must pick the commandment itself to pieces, keeping some of it, and some of it throwing away. With such consummate wisdom has the great Legislator guarded this law, against which He foresaw there would arise not only the opposition of selfishness, but that also of a mistaken theology—guarded it not only

on the right hand, and on the left, before and behind, but guarded it also in its own very structure, so that he who would destroy the law of the Sabbath must perforce destroy far more than it, before he has finished his terrible task.

There is this connection, again, between the Fourth and the other Commandments—that it provides the opportunity and the time for learning the duties prescribed in the other nine. If the Commandments were recorded for us in no published book, and if there were no formally set apart and generally recognised time for their exposition, it is evident that the likelihood of their general observance would be greatly diminished. But just here comes in one evidence of the perfection of God's great code, that it provides within itself the means of its own enforcement and perpetuation. One of its ten precepts provides for the setting apart of a weekly day for the exposition of that revealed will of God of which it is so essential a part, for our being reminded of our duty to that God, and for our renewing of the vows of our allegiance to Him. It is not too much to say, therefore, that the observance of the Fourth Commandment is connected in the closest manner with the observance of the other nine, and that every attempt to weaken its force, or undermine its foundations, militates not only against it, but against the entire body of laws of which it is an integral part.

The fact is, the more we examine the arrangement of the Decalogue, and the internal arrangement of this Commandment, the more traces of Divinity do we discover in both. Paley in his "Natural Theology" drew a famous argument from a watch. "In crossing a heath," he says, "suppose I found a watch upon the ground, and it should be inquired how the watch happened to be in that place, I should hardly think of the answer that for anything I knew the watch might

always have been there. For when we come to inspect the watch, we perceive that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose—*e.g.*, that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day; that if the several parts had been differently shaped from what they are, of a different size from what they are, or placed after any other manner, or in any other order than that in which they are placed, either no motion at all would have been carried on in the machine, or none which would have answered the use which is now served by it. . . . This mechanism being observed, the inference, I think, is inevitable—that the watch must have had a maker.” A similar teleological argument might be drawn from the Decalogue—the great moral time-keeper of the world. Its nature proclaims a Divine authorship. Its inner structure speaks of the workmanship of a Divine hand. The delicate adjustment of part to part, of law to law, as of wheel to wheel, and of tooth to tooth in the machinery of the watch, unmistakeably reveals that it had a Maker, that it has a purpose, that that Maker must have been God, and that that purpose must be a purpose of good; while, if we select any single law, such as this which we are specially considering, and subject it to minute examination, as the microscopist examines a single anther or ovule of a flower, we discover in itself proof the most convincing that “the hand that made it was Divine.” The Heidelberg Catechism makes a division of Theology which has always seemed to us most suggestive. It arranges all revealed truth under three heads—viz., our Ruin, our Redemption, and our Gratitude, and under this third head it places the Ten Commandments. Whether the division be in all respects a good one or not, this last allocation is at all events very beautiful. If we love God, gratitude for all His benefits will lead us to keep His Com-

mandments, and the more we examine them, or any one of them, the more reason shall we see to stir up our souls, and all that is within us to adore and admire the wisdom which glows in every line of His wondrous code.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *CHRIST AND THE SABBATH.*

**WE** now come to a most important branch of our inquiry. All parties to this discussion are agreed that the authority of the New Testament on the subject of the Sabbath, as on other subjects, is indubitable. To the New Testament, then, let us go. Let us take up the various passages in it which speak of the Sabbath, and endeavour calmly to examine them and ascertain their meaning. An immense amount of misconception is afloat regarding the real teaching of the New Testament on the subject. We see this in our popular literature, especially in our serials. Texts are quoted (or misquoted), evidently without the smallest glimmer of their meaning being discerned.\* Then readers take for granted that they are correctly quoted and correctly explained. The mischief thus spreads, and the blind being led by the blind, the proverbial result is inevitable. It will be well, therefore, to devote a chapter to enabling the reader to see for himself the real teaching of the New Testament on this subject.

The word "Sabbath" occurs in the authorised ver-

\* The ignorance of the Bible displayed by many of the writers in our leading serials and by some even of our foremost authors is deplorable. Take the following examples, gathered almost at random :—" 'I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed,' as says the Prodigal in the Parable !"—" 'Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's and to God the things which are God's,' as says Paul !" "English authors cannot prosper till American publishers learn to respect the "seventh" commandment !"

sion of the New Testament sixty times. Three Greek words are represented by this one English term. In thirty-nine passages the word rendered Sabbath is Σάββατον. St. John uses this word only. In twenty passages the word is Σάββατα, and in one instance the word in the original is a compound which requires several English words to represent it—Προσάββατον—"the day before the Sabbath." Practically, however, we may take it for our purpose that in all the sixty places the word with which we have to deal is the same, the difference between σάββατον and σάββατα being merely the difference between the pure Hebrew and the Aramaic, a difference which, for the object we have in view, is immaterial; while in the case of the compound word Προσάββατον we have simply the same term with a prefix. The Revised Version makes no change in the translation in any case save the following:—in Luke vi. 1, for, "It came to pass on the second Sabbath after the first," it reads "It came to pass on a Sabbath," inserting, however, this footnote at the place—"Many ancient authorities insert 'second—first.'" At Acts xvii. 2, we have a similar footnote, giving the word "weeks" instead of "Sabbath days" as an alternative reading in the passage—"Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and for three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the Scriptures." The Revised Version adds the word "Sabbath" in one instance where it does not occur in the Authorised Version. We refer to Heb. iv. 9, which it renders—"There remaineth, therefore, a Sabbath rest for the people of God." It will be seen that the difference between the two versions in regard to the word are immaterial, so far as our subject is concerned. Speaking broadly, it may be said that the two are in accord on the matter, and we may take it therefore on the conjoint authority of both translators and revisers that the original Greek is faithfully and fairly represented in our Authorised

Version in all the passages which speak of the Day of Rest.

Taking up the various places in their order, we come first of all to that memorable Sabbath walk of Jesus and His disciples—

#### IN THE CORNFIELDS.

Of this, three accounts are given us, one by Mat. (xii. 1), one by Mark (ii. 23), and the third by Luke (vi. 1). The day was the Jewish Sabbath. The disciples were hungry. The funds at the disposal of the little company were but scanty, and provisions had run short. Their route, as they walked with the Master, led them along a path which ran through fields covered with ripe, or fast-ripening, corn. They took some of it, and, rubbing out the grain in their hands, ate of it. In this they were perfectly justified by Old Testament law, leaving all other justifications for the moment out of account, for in Deut. xxiii. 25 it is expressly said:—"When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbours, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thy hand." But the rabbins said, "No; this might lawfully be done on a week-day, but not on the Sabbath. It amounts to 'reaping, threshing, and grinding;' the plucking being equivalent to reaping, the rubbing to threshing and grinding, and is therefore entirely unlawful." The Jews accordingly found fault with the conduct of the disciples. Our Lord defended it, and as His teaching on the occasion gives us very clearly and explicitly His mind on the subject of the Sabbath, it will be well for us to notice it carefully.

(1.) He justifies their conduct *on the ground of necessity*. They were hungry and needed food and had a right to take the food which the law and custom of the land made ready to their hand. In support of



this view of the case, He cites the case of David—a most apposite one in the circumstances. On one occasion, when hungry and unable to obtain food, he entered the house of God and “did eat the shew-bread which was not lawful for him to eat” (in ordinary circumstances), and the case of the priests who “on the Sabbath days profane the Sabbath (by the necessary work of the sanctuary) and are blameless.”

(2.) He justifies the disciples *on the ground of mercy*. In effect, He says to the Pharisees: “Your ways are not like mine or like my Father’s. He does not desire His creatures to suffer even in supposed deference to His law. He will have ‘mercy and not sacrifice.’”

(3.) He justifies them *on the ground of the Sabbath law itself*. The disciples are His ministers. In His service they have a right to sustenance on the Sabbath as on other days, just as the priests had in olden time.

(4.) He justifies them *on the ground of His own authority over the Sabbath*. He is “Lord of the Sabbath.” It is His prerogative, therefore, to interpret it authoritatively, to say what its proper observance involves and what it does not. The Giver of the Sabbath law can best interpret the Sabbath law. Even if no precedent had sustained the conduct of His disciples, His word alone was sufficient to vindicate them in what they had done.

(5.) He does more than all this—*He shows that not only had the disciples not acted contrary to the law, but the Pharisees had*. The disciples had not broken the law of the Sabbath, but the Pharisees had broken the law of charity. Referring to Hosea vi. 6, He tells them, in stinging words, which must surely have made the ears of every one that heard them to tingle, that they had condemned the guiltless, and had proved that, like their forefathers, they did not understand even the first principles of the oracles of God. And so the tables are turned.

But it is as important to notice in the account of this incident what Christ did *not* say, as what He did. Much misapprehension will be prevented by carefully noting:—

(1.) He did *not* say in defence of His disciples—“Trouble them not. The Sabbath is abolished.” It would seem as if some people were under the impression that that *is* what He said. They require to read the story over again.

(2.) Nor did He say—“It is not worth while finding fault with them. The Sabbath is *about to be abolished*.” Some people, again, talk and write as if this were either stated or implied in our Lord’s words, and of course fall into gross error in consequence. The reader will look in vain for any such statement or implication in the entire passage.

(3.) Nor did he say—“The Sabbath law is now relaxed. Once, such things as the disciples have been doing would have been unlawful; but those days are past. The Sabbath is not now what it was.” You may look long and narrowly into the narrative without finding any thing of this kind. Yet some people seem to imagine that there was something like this said on the occasion. At least, one cannot well account for the mode in which they talk and act on any other supposition.

Moreover, by the fairest inference it can be shown that our Lord’s language implied the exact opposite of each of these statements which He did not make. For

(1.) Certainly He implied that the Sabbath was still in existence. He speaks of it as an extant institution, and merely interprets its own old laws.

(2.) He implies that it is to continue. Else why does He go to the trouble of putting it on a proper basis?

(3.) He implies that the true Sabbath law, as interpreted by Himself, was still to be binding.

(4.) Moreover, He shows that the disciples have not broken the law at all—that they need no lowering of its standard to allow them to escape—that they have really complied with its requirements.

It has been argued by some that Christ here draws a distinction between the law of Sabbath observance and the law of mercy, and that He argues that if these two clash, the former, as being a mere ceremonial regulation, must give way. This argument, however, proceeds upon an entire misunderstanding of the passage. Our Saviour is *not excusing a breach* of Sabbath law. There had been no breach of Sabbath law. On the contrary, His contention is that the disciples had broken no law, but that the Pharisees, their accusers, had.

But no part of the incident has been more misunderstood and misrepresented than the concluding words: "For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." The meaning of this statement has been represented by opponents of Sabbath observance to be that Christ has power to release men from the necessity of observing the Sabbath. There cannot be the smallest doubt, however, that that is not the intention of the words at all. First of all, it is to be noted that the conjunction *καί* ("even" or "also"), in Mat. xii. 8, is now regarded by all good critics as not properly belonging to the text. The omission of the one little word makes a great difference in the meaning. Calvin, for example, arguing from the presence of the conjunction, places the Sabbath in the same category as the shew-bread and the sacrifices previously mentioned—things merely ceremonial and destined to be done away. But that classification falls to the ground with the disappearance of the *καί*. It has only the authority of some Cursives, and is omitted by the great MSS. which are recognised as really authoritative. Hence the Revised Version correctly reads: "For the

Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath;" and with the disappearance of the conjunction, the argument built on it disappears likewise. But, if this "also" has had a force ascribed to it to which it is not entitled, the other little word *γάρ* ("for") has, on the contrary, too often not had its meaning recognised at all. Yet it helps us in no small degree to the true significance and intention of the statement we are considering. What is the force of the word? It is plainly an illative, and gives the reason for the preceding statement—the ground for the assertion of the innocence of the disciples. It is as if Christ had said: "You have been condemning these men unjustly. They are entirely innocent. It is enough that I say so, *for* I am the Lord of the Sabbath, and if I am satisfied, that is enough." This is the evident exegesis of the words. There is yet a third word in the passage which has been strangely overlooked—the word *ἀναισθητος* ("innocent")—the proper understanding of which completely bears out our position. Christ is here vindicating guiltless persons, not excusing transgressors. He tells their accusers so. There is no need of relaxing the law to palliate their offence. They have committed no offence. They are innocent.

The entire passage, therefore, clearly teaches that the Sabbath institution was expressly recognised by Christ—that He had no intention either of abolishing it or of relaxing its binding force—but, at the same time, that it was to be observed, not in such a narrow spirit as the glosses of human casuistry thought fit to impose upon it, but with a full, free, and joyous recognition of the great love of our heavenly Father, whose ordinance it is, and with an equal recognition of the just claims and needs of man, for whose good, and not for whose oppression, it was given. We still require to bear all this carefully in view, even in this last quarter of our boastful nineteenth century.

In the same chapter of Matthew (xii. 9), we find another instructive incident bearing on our subject—the healing of the man with

#### THE WITHERED HAND.

His story is given with more or less of circumstantiality by the same three Evangelists who tell us of the walk in the corn-fields—Matthew (xii. 9), Mark (iii. 1), and Luke (vi. 6). The incident took place in a synagogue. A man was there whose right hand had been disabled by paralysis. Christ's enemies, who were incessantly dogging His steps, collecting materials for charges of impiety against Him, were on the watch to see whether His compassion for the poor fellow would not be restrained by the fact that it was the Sabbath day. So miserably small and mean were their religious ideas! At length they put the question pointedly to Him: "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?" The Saviour's answer is threefold. He first replies by a strong piece of *a fortiori* analogical reasoning, "What man of you shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day," etc. Secondly, He lays down a great principle, "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day." Thirdly, He heals the man.

This striking little incident has a fine interpretative bearing on the law of the Sabbath. It is to be noticed that no hint is given here, any more than in the case previously considered, of any abolition of it, or any intended abolition. But a withering rebuke is boldly administered to the narrow souls who would refuse to do for a fellow-man what they would not hesitate to do for a sheep, and through them a withering rebuke to all small men, in all ages, who imagine that they honour God by inflicting on, or neglecting to remove from, His creatures, suffering, at any time, Sabbath

day or week day. The principle laid down in that terse statement, "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day," covers a very wide extent of ground. If the incident of the corn-field refers specially to works of necessity, this case of the withered hand particularly legalises works of mercy, and makes it not only allowable, but imperative, to turn the sacred hours of the Holy Day to the best account by caring on it for all God's creatures that are in need, but specially for man, our own brother, and God's chiefest work.

#### IN THE CAPERNAUM SYNAGOGUE,

a somewhat similar incident took place, recorded by Mark (i. 21), and Luke (iv. 31). Jesus was at Capernaum, and, according to custom, He went to the synagogue on a certain Sabbath. At the proper part of the service for so doing, He addressed to the congregation a discourse which astonished them. Among them that day there happened to be one of those unfortunate creatures who seem to have been so numerous in Palestine in the days of the Incarnation—a demoniac. Jesus, according to His usual practice, healed him. There seems to have been no remark made on this occasion as to the cure having been wrought on the Sabbath. At all events, none is recorded. The teaching of the incident goes in the same direction as that which we have just been considering—showing the propriety of doing good on the Sabbath. But this additional point comes out in it—the Master's constant practice of attending the place of worship of the locality where He happened to be on the Sabbath, and preaching in it when He had opportunity.

#### IN THE NAZARETH SYNAGOGUE.

This latter point comes out again in the account of

the first occasion on which we have any mention of His addressing a synagogue congregation. It was at Nazareth—the home of His childhood—and Luke tells us (iv. 16), that, “as His custom was,” He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath. The marvellous text which He chose on that occasion—“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,” etc.—and the no less marvellous sermon which He preached from it, will be fresh in the recollection of our readers.

Luke (xiii. 10) gives us a precious little incident which occurred also in a synagogue—where, we are not told. It was the Sabbath day again, and again in the congregation which had assembled there was a hopeless invalid. This time it was a woman, who was afflicted with a painful disease of eighteen years’ standing. By a word Jesus looses her from her infirmity. This provokes the ruler of the synagogue. Addressing the people, but really talking at Jesus as much as to them, he says:—“There are six days in which men ought to work, and not on the Sabbath day.” This unhappy remark, so characteristically Judaic, drew forth from the Master one of those burning rebukes with which more than once He scathed into nothingness the haughty self-sufficiency of His adversaries. “Thou hypocrite,” He indignantly cries, “doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo! these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?” A fresh vindication is thus given of the right and the practice of doing whatever good comes to our hand on the Holy Day. No wonder the Evangelist concludes his story of this encounter with the statement—“When He had said these things, all His adversaries were ashamed.” Well they might be!

## AT A PHARISEE'S HOUSE.

On another occasion Jesus "went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread" (Luke xiv. 1). In the midst of His fatiguing work He needed refreshment, and, having no home of His own to which to go, He accepted the invitation of this friend. A number of other persons were also invited to share the repast. A man afflicted with a dropsical complaint made his appearance during the meal, and Christ, knowing the thoughts which would be flitting through the brains of His host and fellow-guests, boldly propounded the question, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?" There was no answer. They had been so often routed on this battle-ground that probably they had no desire for another defeat. Christ first, then, healed the sufferer, and then vindicated His conduct by the same argument with which He had already discomfited Jewish cavillers more than once: "Which of you shall have an ass, or an ox, fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?" To this again, there was no answer. What answer could there be?

Some people have said that the action of the Master on this occasion amounted to the attending of a dinner party on the Sabbath. It may seem hardly worth while to spend time over such a point. All that is said, however, in the passage is, "He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread." What meal it was is not specified. Nor are the viands mentioned. But, granting that it was something corresponding to our dinner, and that others were present as well as Jesus, this is something very far from constituting the occasion a dinner party in our modern sense of the term. If a clergyman, preaching at a distance from home, receives an invitation from one of his hearers to partake of dinner at his house after service,



and if the host ask some of his fellow-worshippers to come along with the stranger, we have what appears to be a parallel case to that recorded by Luke. That, however, is something very different from what is implied when it is asserted that Jesus attended dinner parties on the Sabbath. It is to be feared that the wish to give the Master's conduct this appearance is father to the thought. Both wish and thought, however, these cavillers must cherish on their own authority. They have no right to read them into a narrative where they are not. But, indeed, one would rejoice at any number of Sabbath dinner-parties like that at this Pharisee's table. At it the guests got that incomparable teaching about humility—about inviting the poor to our feasts—and the parable of the Great Supper. We shall gladly welcome all the Sabbath feasts that can be provided where the host shall engage himself to provide such a teacher, and such teaching for his guests. Till that is done, people had better not call by the same name things which differ from each other, *toto cælo*, like this “eating of bread” and a nineteenth century dinner party.

#### AT BETHESDA.

Another case of Sabbath healing was that where the miracle was wrought at the pool of Bethesda (John v. 1). On this occasion the objection made by the Jews, as recorded by the Evangelist, was not so much to the cure which was wrought as to the man's carrying his bed on the sacred day. So miserably dwarfed and contracted had their souls become! This was “a bearing of burdens,” and could not be tolerated on the Sabbath. These people would have allowed the man to bear the burden of his hopeless infirmity, Sabbath and week-day, for his life long. But to bear his mat-bed—now that he could walk erect and strong like

themselves—in proof of the great cure which infinite mercy had wrought on him, was more than their pious zeal could tolerate! Let us not marvel at them overmuch. There are narrow-minded souls among ourselves not so greatly superior to these precisely zealous purists. We are told that they sought to take Christ's life because of His conduct. Their zeal for law and order, for religion and godliness, did not restrain them from conspiring to break the Sixth Commandment, in their anxiety for the observance of the Fourth according to their strictly silly notions. The answer of the Lord to their small, miserably small, assaults, is as lofty as their views were petty and contemptible. What dignity breathes in His words—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work!"

In John vii. 23, we have another defence from the lips of Christ of His practice of healing disease on the Sabbath. (How strange it seems to us that He should need to defend such a practice even once!) Using His favourite proof from analogy again, He argues that, although no "servile work" was permitted by the Mosaic law on the Sabbath, yet circumcision was permitted and practised on that day, much more should the deliverance of a man from disease be counted right. "Moses," He says, "gave you circumcision, and ye on the Sabbath day circumsise a man. If a man on the Sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye angry at me because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

The same evangelist gives us in chapter ix. an account of the cure by the Master of a blind man. From verse 14 we learn that this miracle also was wrought on the Sabbath.

## MATTHEW XXIV. 20.

In Matthew xxiv. 20 we have a text which has an important bearing on our subject. Our Lord is discoursing on the impending destruction of Jerusalem, and on the horrors by which it is to be accompanied. In the course of His remarks He says: "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Now, one point is clear from these words, a point to which we have already adverted—the Sabbath was not intended to come to an end with the death of Christ. The destruction of Jerusalem was not to take place, and did not take place, for many years after the Crucifixion. Yet, in speaking of the overthrow of the Holy City, Christ talks of the Sabbath in such a way as to show that it was still to be in existence at the time, and by implication sanctions its observance. It is as if He said: "Jerusalem is about to be destroyed. But the Sabbath will not be destroyed. It will exist then as it exists now." No hint about its abolition. On the contrary, a distinct intimation that though Jerusalem and the Temple might fall, the Day of Rest should not be overthrown.

Another little bit of information may be gleaned from the words before us. It is this—the Christian Sabbath is, *mutatis mutandis*, but a continuation of the Jewish. Notice to whom Christ is speaking on this occasion. Not to the Jewish people at large, but (verse 3) to "the disciples." It was the Twelve whom He was addressing. They "came unto Him privily," asking for information as to the troubles He had been speaking of, and it was on them that He urged the propriety of this prayer regarding the time of their flight. Now, the Lord knew perfectly well all about the after history of these disciples. He knew that forty years subsequently they would be in the new dispensation—the dispensation of the Spirit. He knew

that they would be observing, with the sanction of His own example, not the seventh, but the first day of the week as the Day of Rest; yet, fully anticipating these changes, and knowing all about them, there is one point as to which He foresees no change and appoints none—the Sabbath is still to be observed and Sabbath law is still to have force. It is not another institution that is then to be set up, of a kindred but different character. It is just the same old Sabbath that had been observed from the time of Creation—that had been prescribed in the Fourth Commandment—with such changes impressed upon it as altered circumstances required, but, withal, the later Sabbath not differing from the earlier, any more than the sun as it shines on the summer morning, in the beautiful grey dawn that breaks so sweetly over land and sea, differs from the same sun as it shines at summer noontide in its magnificent glow. There are differences in the two shinings, but there are not two suns. And there are differences between the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian, but there are not two Sabbaths.

Again, the name “Sabbath” is here sanctioned as applicable to the Christian Day of Rest. There is something in a name, Shakespeare’s authority notwithstanding. Often, men excuse and gloss over their sins by giving them fine names. Duelling becomes “an affair of honour.” A breach of the Seventh Commandment is spoken of as “an affair of gallantry”—a lie as “an economy of truth”—a bastard as “a love-child”—and here in Ireland, we had, not long ago, the “Invincibles,” calling murder only the “removing” of a man, and, no doubt, concealing, by the use of that term, the heinousness of their crime to a large extent even from themselves; while more recently a wholesale system of robbery and fraud was dignified by the high-sounding title “the Plan of Campaign.” Men who would shudder at the commission

of gross sins sometimes come to think little of them when their real hideousness is disguised beneath a fine name. This thought has an important bearing on our subject. If the Day of Rest is only "Sunday," and has no right to the older name, then the associations which for millenniums clustered round the Sabbath are gone. It loses its Biblical aspect. Its venerable age sinks out of sight. All the memorable history which has ennobled it fades away, and, worst of all, the authority by which it was first enacted, and in accordance with which it was observed in after time, has a tendency to be forgotten—the sacred sanctions of the day are obscured, and, insensibly perhaps, but none the less surely and balefully, we come to think of the day, not as a Divine institution at all, but as only a man-made holiday; not as a day sacred to God, but as one on which we have full liberty to do as we list within certain conventional limits. I would not be a stickler for names. As excellent people talk of "Sunday" as of "Sabbath," and it can be, and is, as well observed under the one appellation as the other. But let it be well noted that we have a right to call the day "the Sabbath." In doing so we follow the best example, that of Christ. That name is, besides, in itself a beautiful and suggestive name, for Sabbath is rest, and Sabbath-day, Rest-day. There is peace in its very sound. And the name has, like many another name, a great principle lying at the back of it, the principle that the day is no new institution, but one only a little younger than the world itself, round which gather the holy memories of thousands of years and the history of earth's happiest peoples and most prosperous epochs.

That the interpretation which applies this text to the Christian Sabbath is the correct one, there can be, I think, no manner of doubt. That which applies it to the Jewish Sabbath, yields, in my judgment, any-

thing but a good meaning. It makes Christ speak of His disciples as being still Jews forty years after His death.

#### THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

Several mentions of the Sabbath occur in connection with the death of our Lord. Of the Friday, on which the Crucifixion took place, it is said, "It was the Preparation and the Sabbath drew on" (Luke xxiii. 54). More explicitly Mark says—(xv. 42) "It was the Preparation, that is the day before the Sabbath," and John says—(xix. 31) "The Jews, therefore, because it was the Preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross upon the Sabbath day, for that Sabbath day was an high day, besought Pilate that their legs might be broken." On the importance of Christians, as well as Jews, making some sort of "preparation" for the Sabbath on the day before, we have already observed, and shall have occasion to speak again.

Again, of the two Maries we read (Mat. xxviii. 1), "In the end of the Sabbath" (or as the Revised Version reads—"Late on the Sabbath day"), "as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week," they came to the sepulchre. Mark's words are (xvi. 1), "When the Sabbath was past." Luke's account is (xxiv. 1), "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre," and John says—"The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre." Our Saturday, their Sabbath, was over, and our Sabbath, their first day of the week, was come—the day which was henceforth to be the Christian's most blessed day, reminding him not only of the old creation but of the new—not only of the first birth of all things, but of the being born again—not only of the rising of a world into being, but of the rising again of the world's

Maker and Redeemer from the grave on the world's behalf.

OUR LORD'S TREATMENT OF THE SABBATH.

Pausing here at the close of our consideration of the references in the Gospels to the Sabbath, let us try to sum up their teaching as to our Master's views on the subject.

(1.) It is evident from the passages to which we have referred that He neither abolished the Sabbath nor relaxed its sanctions.

(2.) He observed the Sabbath Himself, and not only so, but, projecting His thoughts into the future, He foresaw and sanctioned its observance after He should be gone.

(3.) He cleared it from the accretions of rabbinical tradition and gloss, which had gathered round it in the course of ages. But in this process, instead of doing anything to weaken its authority, or interfere with its binding force, He only brought out its claims and its beauty into brighter lustre.\* Sometimes there is found buried in one of our Irish bogs a golden ornament which, centuries ago, has fastened the mantle of some Celtic chieftain. Through the damps and ne-

\* "One might as well say that one who was scraping barnacles from the bottom of a ship was destroying it, as to say that 'Christ was a Sabbath-breaker.' Removing barnacles is a sign that a vessel is to be sent out anew."—*The Sabbath for Man*, by Rev. Dr. Crafts.

"There does not seem to be one instance in which Jesus ever set aside an original Mosaic rite or institute. It was the additions made by the Pharisees that He pushed away without reverence, and even with repugnance. He went behind the tradition of the elders to the law itself; nay, He accepted the commands of Moses because they coincided with the Divine will, and condemned only the 'traditions that made the commandments of God of none effect.'"—*Life of Jesus the Christ*, by Henry Ward Beecher.

glects of ages it has become green and disfigured, so as almost completely to have lost, not only the beauty of workmanship which once adorned it, but even the very appearance of gold. When it comes into the hands of one who recognises its preciousness, and when he carefully cleanses away the accretions which have gathered round it, does this action of his proceed from a disregard of his "find" and from a desire to destroy it? On the contrary, is not his cleansing of the ornament reverent and thorough in proportion to the value which he sets upon it, and to the strength of his wish that it may exhibit again its pristine beauty? So with our Lord's treatment of the Sabbath. He found it buried amid a mass of traditional observances which had thrown its meaning and spirit almost altogether into obscurity. Recognising its beauty and value, He took it up lovingly, and with firm but kindly hand He removed the foreign incrustations which had gathered round it, that it might shine again in its own native lustre for the joy and blessing of a needy world.

(4.) He taught that it was to be a day (*a*) of worship; (*b*) of beneficence; (*c*) not of narrow, Pharisaic restrictions, but of holy freedom—freedom, however, always subordinate to, and within the limits of, law.

(5.) He gave it new and additional meaning and beauty by making it His Resurrection Day.

In following the Master in all this, lies, we believe the true secret of right Sabbath-keeping.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### *THE APOSTLES AND THE SABBATH.*

**I**N this chapter we propose examining the various references to the Sabbath which occur in the Apostolic period. When we have done so, we shall have placed before the reader a complete view of the statements of the New Testament regarding it.

We begin with the Acts of the Apostles. In this book there are several references to the Day of Rest. In chap. i. we have an allusion to the Sabbath Day's journey—a distance of 2000 cubits, or between seven and eight furlongs, which tradition had long fixed as the limit of a Sabbath walk. The other passages in the book bearing on our subject refer mainly to the synagogue worship on that day, and to the practice which the Apostles made of utilising this synagogue worship for the purpose of reasoning with the Jews on the claims of Christianity (xiii. 14; xvii. 2; xiii. 27; xiii. 42; xiii. 44; xv. 21; xviii. 4). We find from this book of Acts, as well as from other parts of the New Testament, that the Apostles observed the Christian Sabbath on the First Day (xx. 7; 2 Cor. xvi. 2), meeting on it for worship, for the observance of the Lord's Supper, and for offering contributions to God's cause. But, becoming to the Jews as Jews, if by any means they might gain some of them, they went at times to the synagogues on the old seventh day, accepting the opportunities of exhortation which were afforded them at it, for the purpose of advancing the claims and upholding the cause of Christ. Further,

we find that the early Jewish converts, in some cases, observed both days, and that the Apostles allowed this practice, as they allowed the continuance of circumcision and in some cases actually themselves administered that rite. But the Christian Sabbath was henceforth to be kept on the First Day, that Lord's Day on which John was "in the Spirit" in his sea-girt prison. So the observance of the Seventh Day gradually faded into desuetude, leaving the First in almost undisputed possession of the rights of the Day of Rest, that First Day which is destined to retain all its strength and beauty until the Sabbaths of earth melt and merge into the eternal Sabbath of Heaven.

#### IN THE EPISTLES.

The word Sabbath (*σάββατα*) occurs but once in the Epistles. As the passage is of some importance in this discussion and is often misunderstood and misinterpreted, we must bestow some attention upon it. It is Coloss. ii. 16, 17—"Let no man therefore judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

Now, serious error often arises from the mistake of forgetting the occasion and circumstances which have given rise to the writing of any letter or treatise. Such circumstances are always presupposed by an author to be in the minds of his readers, and they give their own tinge of meaning to his language. Unless, therefore, we keep them steadily in mind we can scarcely fail to make mistakes. It is necessary for us, therefore, to know the object and purpose of this Epistle to the Colossians. Happily these are perfectly clear. It was intended to counteract Judaising teaching and practices, mixed up with a certain Oriental theosophy, which had begun to make their appearance in the

church at Colosse. For this purpose, St. Paul endeavours to show his readers their standing in Christ, in whom Jewish law has found its fulfilment, and Jewish type its anti-type. Let no man, therefore, says he, beguile you in respect to such things. He enumerates a number of Jewish observances, such as "meat" (ceremonially clean or unclean), "drink" (the Essenes drank water only and forbade all other drinks), "holy-days" (literally "feasts"—such as the Feast of Tabernacles, the Passover, etc.), "new moons" (Jewish monthly festivals) or "Sabbath days" (*i.e.*, Jewish Sabbath days), and he warns his readers against all who would teach them that the observance of these was obligatory or possessed any merit or special sacredness. The reader has only to turn to Levit. xxiii. 24, 32, 39, and to Num. xxix. *passim*, to see for himself that the Jews styled many of their festivals Sabbaths. It will be well, while looking at this passage, to take into our view two others of a kindred nature, viz., Rom. xiv. 5, 6, and Galat. iv. 11. The former reads thus—"One man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day regardeth it unto the Lord, and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." The latter is as follows—"Ye observe days and months and times and years; I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." Now all the passages which we have cited are to be taken, if we would have an intelligent apprehension of their meaning and application, in full remembrance of the matters in dispute at the time. Paul *could* not blame his readers for observing *all* days, for he observed the First Day himself, and he directs its observance by others. But he *could*, and he felt he ought to, blame them, not so much for observing Jewish feast days, as for attaching to the observance of them

a special significance and sacredness, instead of rejoicing in their new-found Christian liberty, and for thinking hardly of those who did not see their way to act as they did in respect to them. That this is his meaning, the whole scope and connection of all these passages clearly show. There was no question then as to the observance of the First Day Sabbath. Jewish and Gentile Christians alike kept it.\*

We have already mentioned that there is one other passage in the Epistles which, according to the Revised Version, introduces the word Sabbath, and, as we believe, introduces it rightly and properly. This is Heb. iv. 9—"There remaineth, therefore, a (Sabbath, Revised Version) rest to the people of God." The idea here is a very beautiful and suggestive one. There are three words used in the New Testament which signify the rest which we may have now, even here on earth. First there is *κατάπαυσις*, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "Noah," and not inaptly represented by the thought of his rest at Ararat, when, after its tossings on the strange diluvian sea, his ark rested on the mountains. This is the word employed in the other parts of this chapter in Hebrews, and in the preceding one—"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His (Christ's) *κατάπαυσις*,

\* Haldane quotes from Stopford on this passage in Colossians as follows:—"The word 'Sabbaths' here is plural without the article. It is sometimes used in the plural to signify the weekly Sabbath—but *never without the article*. Whenever given by the Evangelists as contained in any saying of our Lord's, it is given in the singular, except where it meant *Sabbaths in general*; because our Lord intended to displace, *by fulfilling, the plural Sabbaths attending the feasts*, along with the feasts themselves, but to *preserve* the single weekly Sabbath. In John's gospel, written after the cessation of the Jewish polity and laws, the word is never used but in the singular, for like reason. Our Lord corrected only those errors that had disfigured the pure maxims of universal obligation; we find no corrections made by Him of *temporary or national ordinances*."

any of you should seem to come short of it," and so on. Then there is the similar compound *ἀνάπαυσις*, which is the word found in that classic passage, Mat. xi. 28, 29—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you *ἀνάπαυσις*," *i.e.* rest from weariness. Last of all, there is *ἄνεσις*, relaxation, as in 2 Thess. i. 7—"And to you who are troubled, rest with us." But when the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews would speak of the final rest of the saint, he seeks out a new word altogether, a word nowhere else employed in the Bible—the word *σαββατισμός*,—a Sabbath rest—a rest, like God's at the beginning, from all work. It is when we combine the exquisite idea wrapped up in this word with the ideas of the other three which we have mentioned, the ideas of rest from weariness, rest from sorrow, and rest from sin, with this which speaks of rest in the completion of God's new creation, as the first *σαββατισμός* spoke of rest in the completion of His old creation, that we gain the complete, beautiful conception of what the beatific rest, the Sabbath of eternity, is to be. Each earthly Sabbath ought to be an image of it and be pervaded by its spirit, as each tiny rock-pool which you discover among the fucus-clad cliffs, when the tide has ebbed, is on a small scale an image of the great ocean which heaves and frets close by—obeys the same laws, reflects the same summer sky, and is filled with the same crystal element. Each day of God that comes to us ought to be a little bit of Heaven brought down to earth, filled with the same joy, governed by the same holy laws, reflecting the same Blessed Presence. But as the great ocean, stretching away from your feet to the horizon, far transcends in greatness, and mystery, and glory, and beauty, the tiny pool which you have just left, whose waves are ripples, whose brightness is flecked by the shadows of the cliffs, and whose inhabitants are cribbed and confined by the rocky walls that

evermore shut them in, so in greatness, and glory, and beauty, in brightness, and freedom and blessedness. will the Sabbath of heaven far transcend the brightest Rest-Day of which here we have had experience.

Summing up the teaching of the New Testament on our subject, it is clear that Christ and His Apostles recognised the Sabbath, observed the Sabbath, and explained the Sabbath. In keeping it, therefore, we walk in holy society, the society of "the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets," but, holiest and best of all, the society of the Master Himself. If we disregard it, we are not of their spirit.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *THE CHANGE OF DAY.*

**T**HERE is one point with regard to the Sabbath at which we must now look, and, as it is a point of great importance, we shall devote a chapter to its consideration. We refer to the change in the day of its observance. Originally, the seventh day of the week was kept sacred. Now we hallow the first. How and why has this change been made, by whose authority, and with what end in view? Let us look at these points for a little.

That there has been this change of day is evident, and the fact itself is surely significant, that, whereas the original institution mentioned the seventh day, now the first is universally, or all but universally, kept.\* There must be some adequate reason to account for this change. Men do not change their views and their practices so completely without cause. Especially great bodies of men, whole churches, strongly and proverbially conservative in other matters, do not make

\* Shortly after the first edition of this book appeared, the writer happened to be in London. Conversing there one day with an eminent minister, the latter said he had just been reading "Our Rest Day," and made some complimentary references to it. "But," he added, with a humorous twinkle in his eye, "there is one great omission in your book." "What is that?" "Why, you make no mention whatever of the Seventh Day Baptists, and the great importance of the body you may gather from the fact that they have three whole congregations in England!" They keep the Sabbath on the seventh day.

radical alterations like this without sufficient reason. Here are two facts, both undeniable—the first, that originally the Sabbath was kept on the seventh day, the second, that it is now observed on the first all over the world, and our argument is that, even supposing that we could not discover the precise reason for an alteration so great, the fact of the alteration having come about so universally itself argues the existence of a sufficient cause. The principle embodied in the famous words—*quod semper ubique et ab omnibus* applies here. For an observance practised so universally there must be reason, whether that reason be discoverable or not. If a river, after flowing in a certain direction, suddenly changes its course, we may be very certain that the change can be accounted for in some way, either by natural agency or artificial, even although history is silent on the subject. Of the golden stream named the Sabbath, may we not say the same?

There is another thing equally evident,—the precise point of time at which this change of day began. Up to a particular date, no day but the seventh was observed as the Sabbath, since that date almost all Christendom keeps the first. This sharp and clearly defined break synchronizes with the resurrection of Christ. Before the resurrection there was only a seventh day Sabbath. Since it there is a first. Let us see this for ourselves by examining the history of the matter.

The resurrection itself took place on the first day of the week. There is no reason that we can see, flowing from the work of Christ, why it should have occurred on that day more than on any other. We can discover no purposes which would not have been quite as well served by a resurrection on the seventh day, or the fifth, or the third. Now if our Lord had risen on the seventh, it cannot be doubted that the fact of the occurrence of so significant and important an event



on the Jewish Sabbath would have given an added sanctity to that day. But it was expressly arranged that that should not be the day of the resurrection. The sanctity which the day would thus have received was deliberately withheld from it and given to another. Surely there is great significance in this fact, especially when taken in conjunction with the other, that beginning with that first day of the week, our Lord ceased to frequent the synagogue and Temple on the seventh day, as had been His custom, and His disciples, following His example, did the same, and He and they met together on what we now call the Christian Sabbath.

That there might be no doubt in any mind as to the exact day on which the Lord rose, all four evangelists are careful to mention it with great particularity. Matthew says the event took place "as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week" (Matt. xxviii. 1). Mark says it was "very early in the morning, the first day of the week" (Mark xvi. 2). Luke's account is that it occurred "upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning" (Luke xxiv. 1), and John's—"the first day of the week, when it was yet dark" (John xx. 1). There is, and can be no question, therefore, as to this point, that the resurrection took place on the first day of the week, and there can be as little that from and after that date, this day had transferred to it the observances which had hitherto characterised the seventh. On that very first day of the week, on which the resurrection occurred, the eleven met together and Jesus met with them (Luke xxiv. 33). That day week they met again, and again Jesus met with them (John xx. 26). Immediately, it will be observed, the day seems to have become fixed as the day of holy convocation. When the forty days of our Lord's post-resurrection life were expired, and He was gone, the same arrangement continued. "They were

all with one accord in one place," met for their accustomed worship, when the Holy Spirit descended on the Day of Pentecost, and this Day of Pentecost occurred on the first day of the week (Acts ii. 1). At Troas, "upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them" (Acts xx. 7). There, as at Jerusalem, they had come to regard this as the day for Christian worship and the observance of Christian ordinances. At Tyre it seems to have been the same, for when Paul landed there he "tarried there seven days," as he had done at Troas,—doubtless waiting to take advantage of the day of public assembly, in the one case as in the other. In Corinth the same custom prevailed. Paul writes to the Church there—"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Cor. xvi. 2). In the churches of Galatia it was the same (1 Cor. xvi. 1). So universal had the practice of keeping the first day become at a very early period, that John speaks of the day as "the Lord's Day" (Rev. i. 10). By the end of the first century, wherever Christianity had reached, the honours hitherto worn by the seventh day had by common consent been transferred to the first.

When we travel outside the region of inspiration, testimonies to the same effect as those in Scripture meet us on every hand. Pliny the Younger, in his well-known letter to Trajan, speaks of this day when he says of the Christians of his time—"They were accustomed on a stated day to meet before daylight and to repeat among themselves a hymn to Christ as a god."\* The language of Justin Martyr is more distinct. He says in his first "Apology,"—"On the day called Sunday there is a meeting in one place of all

\* *C. Plin. C. Sac.*, x., 97.

who reside either in the towns or in the country, and the memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets are read. The reading having concluded, the president delivers a discourse, instructing the people, and exhorting them to imitate the good things which they had heard. Then we all stand up and engage in prayer, after which bread is brought in, with wine and water. The president offers up according to his ability prayers and thanks a second time, to which the people express their assent with a loud 'Amen.' Then follows a general distribution and participation of the things for which thanks have been given, and a portion is conveyed to the absent by the deacons. The more affluent contribute of their substance as each is inclined, and what is collected is entrusted to the president, who carefully relieves the orphans and widows, and those who from sickness or other causes are needy, and also those in prison, and the strangers who are residing with us, and in short all who have need of help. We all assemble together in common on Sunday."\* Similar testimonies might be adduced from many other authorities, such as Melito, Theophilus of Antioch, Irenæus, and Clement of Alexandria. We content ourselves with but one more, that of Eusebius. His words are very plain and conclusive. He says—"All things whatever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's day, as more appropriately belonging to it, because it has a precedence, and is first in rank, and more honourable than the Jewish Sabbath. It is delivered to us that we should meet together on this day."†

That the change of day was made, therefore, and made at the date of the Resurrection of Christ, is clear. From that first day till now, each Lord's Day has seen

\* *Apol. I.*

† *Comment. on Ps. xcii.*

Christian people assemble in their congregations all over the world for the worship of God.\* Now, as we have shown, it is very certain that this change has not come about without a cause. Can we arrive at the authority for it?

There is sufficient authority for this or any change that they chose to make in the example and teaching of the Apostles. They were the appointed legates of the Head of the Church, to bind or loose, to retain or remit as they chose. Before He left the world He gave them their commission, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Mat. xxviii. 19.) We do not know precisely when He intimated to them His will that the observance of the seventh day should cease and that of the first take its place. There is no record on the subject, any more than there is of other things which are yet most surely believed among us. We do not know when Paul "received of the Lord" that account of the institution and meaning of the Lord's Supper which he has left on record for us in the eleventh chapter of 1st Corinthians. We know he received it and that is sufficient for us. The time and place are unimportant. Similarly, we do not know when Christ told the eleven His will regarding this change of day. That He did intimate it is clear. They would never have acted as they did in a matter so important without a "Thus saith the Lord." Besides, they had His own example for the change. We know that on several occasions He conferred with them re-

\* That from the death of the Apostle John onward to the time of Constantine the first day of the week was kept as the Lord's Day wherever a Christian community was found is a fact quite beyond doubt. Dr. Hessey calls it "a point which no one so much as thought of disputing" (*Bampton Lectures on Sunday*). Mosheim says: "It was observed universally throughout ten Christian Churches, as appears from the united testimony of the most credible writers" (*Church History*, Book I., IV., 2).

garding the future arrangements of His Church, and, no doubt on some such occasion He settled this point among others. Before He was taken up "He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the Apostles whom He had chosen, to whom also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts i. 2, 3). Paul could say to the Church at Thessalonica, "Ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus" (1 Thess. iv. 2).

No doubt, as at Creation, the Lord, in addition to His own example in resting on the Sabbath also set it apart by a special blessing to be a day of rest, so after the Resurrection He gave the same two sanctions to the change of day. The apostles were not the men without proper authority to "break one of these least commandments and to teach men so." They were not men given to change. It was but slowly that the large ideas of the Gospel gained access to their minds. They were not eager for innovation. Nothing therefore can be more certain than that they had full authority from the Lord of the Sabbath for what they did in the matter of the Sabbath. They had that authority in the Lord's example. They had it also, we may be well assured, in His expressly revealed will.\*

There is no doubt, of course, that Paul repeatedly met with the Jews on the seventh day and "reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, as his manner was." But he himself gives us the reason why he did so. It was not to sanction the keeping of the seventh day Sabbath. "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews" (1 Cor. ix. 20). He circumcised

\* "Nothing short of apostolic precedence can account for the universal religious observance (of the Lord's Day) in the churches of the second century. There is no dissenting voice."—*Schaff's Church History*, II., 201.

Timothy, and purified himself according to the manner of the Jews. He went to the synagogue on the Jewish Sabbath, as any modern Jewish missionary would be glad to do if he could. But he no more thereby sanctioned the keeping of the seventh day than when he preached at Areopagus he sanctioned idolatry.

Christ had full authority to change the day. "The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day" (Mat. xii. 8). He instituted it at first, for He was the Creator. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John i. 3). From that time of the first Sabbath He was its Lord, to interpret its laws and change it as He chose. As its Lord He cleared it from the rabbinical accretions which had gathered round it when He came to earth, and as its Lord also, when He rose from the dead, He altered the day of its observance—being, need one say, fully within His right in so doing?

There was a reasonableness in the change. *A priori* it was a change which might have been expected. Dr. Wardlaw has well put this view of the matter thus—  
 "At the original institution of the Sabbath, one special reason is assigned for its celebration, 'On the seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and He rested the seventh day from all His work which He had made, and God blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it, *because that* in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made' (Gen. ii. 2, 3). The Sabbath was thus originally an instituted commemoration of the great work of creation—a day to keep men in mind of the origin and of the Divine Originator of all things, of the power and wisdom and goodness of the all-glorious Creator, and of the duty of fearing, loving, worshipping, and serving Him. This was the grand primary reason of the institution and by no change has this reason ever been superseded. But when the law of the Sabbath was long after enjoined

upon the Jews, while this original reason was assigned for it as retaining all its force, an additional reason, arising out of their own circumstances, and the special kindness of Jehovah towards them, supervenes upon the former—is not substituted for it but associated with it—‘Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord hath commanded thee. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates, that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: *therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day*’ (Deut. v. 12-15). That the latter reason is not a substituted but an added one, is manifest from the fact that when the commandment was announced along with the rest by the voice of Jehovah from Sinai, the original reason alone is mentioned.

“It is thus proved that, though the primary reason could not be annulled, others might be added to it. If a second might, so might a third. Let the supposition then be made that at ‘the fulness of the time,’ the completion of the Saviour’s redeeming work had been assigned as a new reason for the celebration of the Sabbath, and that the day had at the same time been retained. Had this been done, we should have been in precisely the same circumstances (only with the important exception of the immense superiority of our additional reason to theirs) with the ancient Israelites, when their deliverance from Egypt was superinduced upon the original reason of the Sabbatic celebration. But mark the difference. The transcendent excellence

and glory of the work of redemption, and the surpassing preciousness of its blessings, will not admit of its having the place of a mere additional reason for the keeping of the day. It must become the chief. It must have the first place. It must take precedence even of creation. First in the Divine estimate of greatness, it must be first in man's grateful and reverential commemoration. How then shall this priority be marked? How shall the superior importance of redemption be recognised and testified in the celebration? Why, in order to give it the lead, the day shall be changed. Creation had the day before; Redemption shall have it now. Not in either case exclusively, for as, from the time of the first promise, God was worshipped as Redeemer as well as Creator, so from the time of the fulfilment of the promise by the finished work of Christ, He continues to be worshipped as Creator as well as Redeemer. But His glory as seen in the face of Jesus, in the wonders of that work of salvation into which angels desire to look, surpassing His glory in the external universe, and the benefit to man from the one so prodigiously exceeding that arising to Him from the provisions of the other, He is specially owned and adored on the Christian Sabbath, in the character of 'the God of our salvation.' Now, such an arrangement recommends itself to our minds as reasonable and right."\*

There can be no doubt then that the day has been changed, changed for adequate reasons and by adequate authority. True, there is to be found in the New Testament no express command bidding us in so many words keep the first day and not the seventh. But no one who knows anything of the spirit or style of the book would expect such a command. The New Testament contains no Decalogue. It is a book of great

\* *The Divine Authority and Permanent Obligation of the Sabbath*, by Rev. Ralph Wardlaw, D.D., 25.



principles rather than of precise and formal legislation. If we are to wait until we get formal deliverances from it on every point of Christian economy, we must perforce leave many an important question unanswered, and many a doctrine now most surely believed among us must be relegated to the region of uncertainty. More questions than that of the proper day for the observance of the Sabbath are left in its pages without an express answer delivered in so many words. But there are other modes of expressing the will of God besides the mode of formal legislation. The example of Christ is as binding as His command. The practice of Apostles is itself the best legislation, and if, as we have endeavoured to show, this Apostolic practice necessarily implies a command from the Master, and if it is inconceivable, almost impossible, that the Apostolic College could have led the Church to change a practice which had existed for thousands of years without having first received from Christ directions on the subject, then we have for this change the clearest warrant, one which fully accounts for and justifies the practice of Christendom in the matter.

The truth is, the Jewish Sabbath had in Christ's day become a dead and effete and corrupt thing. There was no life about it, and as little of either beauty or utility. It was time for it to disappear; and it did, both the day and its spirit. It had decayed and waxed old, and was ready to vanish away, and gently, but firmly, Jesus touched it and it was gone. It was buried beside Him in the new tomb, but unlike Him never saw a resurrection, and never will. But as, in ancient fable, from the dead ashes of one bird arose another, not only far more beautiful, but gifted with immortality, so out of the grave of the Jewish Sabbath arose the Christian, beautiful as its author, and destined to live on till the Sabbath of earth melts into that of heaven. It is the same as the Jewish, and yet not the

same,—the same, as the Christian is the same man after his conversion as he was before, the same as the spiritual body which we shall assume at the resurrection will be the same as we have now, but not the same, differing from its predecessor as the new creature in Christ differs from the old man, or as the heavenly body from the earthly. It is the same Sabbath which proceeded from the hand of Deity at the beginning, the day altered, but the thing itself unaltered. Yet it is not the same, for it has been rehabilitated and re-baptised, and now breathes as it never did, and never could before, the name not merely of a Creator but of a risen Redeemer.

## CHAPTER X.

### *THE CHURCH OF ROME AND THE SABBATH.*

THE Church of Rome subjects the Decalogue to very remarkable treatment. Perhaps enough of public attention has not been turned to this. It may be worth while, therefore, to describe it with all due conciseness.

I. First of all, the Church of Rome mutilates the entire Decalogue in the most shameful manner. That the reader may judge for himself on this subject, I give here the Romish version of the Ten Commandments as they are printed in "The Most Rev. Dr. James Butler's Catechism, revised, enlarged, approved, and recommended by the four Roman Catholic Archbishops of Ireland, as a general Catechism for the kingdom."

"Q. Say the Ten Commandments of God ?

A. (1.) I am the Lord thy God—thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.

(2.) Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

(3.) Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

(4.) Honour thy father and thy mother.

(5.) Thou shalt not kill.

(6.) Thou shalt not commit adultery.

(7.) Thou shalt not steal.

(8.) Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

(9.) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.

(10.) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods."

Too much attention cannot be turned to this version (or perversion), in these days when the Romish Church is asserting herself with such lofty claims in these lands, and when unhappily she has succeeded in leading captive so many unwary souls. The more we look into it, the more reason we see to wonder at the unblushing effrontery of any body, pretending to be a Church of God, daring to deal with a law of heaven as the Church of Rome has here dealt with the Decalogue. Notice—

(a.) One entire Commandment, the Second, she has boldly omitted altogether. The reason is very plain. That Commandment emphatically denounces such graven images, and such bowing down to them, as are to be seen any day in every Romish chapel in the world. It would, therefore, have been a highly inconvenient and uncomfortable thing for her to put that Commandment into the hands of her votaries. She could not do so. Her own condemnation is written in it. So, impiously audacious though the act is, she cuts the Gordian knot by eliminating the Commandment from the Decalogue altogether. No body of men on earth, professing to be a Christian Church, would have dared to commit such an act but herself. But Rome shrinks from nothing. No wonder she keeps the Holy Scriptures from her people. If they looked into them they would see, all too plainly, how different the teaching of their Church is from that contained there.\*

(b.) In several of the other Commandments we find

\* The Synod of Toulouse, held in the year 1229, ordained as follows—"We prohibit also the laity to have the books of the Old or New Testament, unless any one should wish from a feeling of devotion to have a Psalter or Breviary for Divine service, or 'The Hours of the Blessed Virgin.' But we strictly forbid them to have the above-mentioned books in the vulgar tongue." And the Council of Trent declared that "if the Holy Scriptures, translated into the vulgar tongue, be allowed to every one, the temerity of men will cause more evil than good to arise out of it."

alterations or omissions deliberately made. From the Third (their second, owing to the omission of the Second) the solemn sanction is omitted — “For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.” In the Fourth (the third with them), only the opening words are retained; all the remainder is left out. In the Fifth (their fourth), the beautiful words which make it “the first commandment with promise,” are deleted. The Tenth, to make up for and conceal the expunging of the Second, and to hide the fact from the people that they have not really Ten Commandments, but only nine, is cut in two, each piece being called a commandment. What language is strong enough to apply to this unholy mangling of the Divine law?

But even worse is yet to come. For—

(c.) The Church of Rome actually adds to the Ten Commandments six more of her own. Butler’s Catechism, from which we have quoted already, the authorised Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church, which bears the *imprimatur* of the Irish archbishops, says, after treating of the Commandments—

“Q. Are there any other commandments besides the Ten Commandments of God?

A. Yes; the commandments or precepts of the Church, which are chiefly six.

Q. Say the Six Commandments of the Church?

A. (1.) To hear Mass on Sundays and all holy-days of obligation. (2.) To fast and abstain on the days commanded. (3.) To confess our sins at least once a year. (4.) To receive worthily the blessed Eucharist at Easter, or within the time appointed, *i.e.*, from Ash Wednesday to the octave day of SS. Peter and Paul inclusive. (5.) To contribute to the support of our pastors. (6.) Not to solemnise marriage at the forbidden time, nor to marry persons within the forbidden degrees of kindred, or otherwise prohibited by the Church, nor clandestinely.”

Have the words with which the canon of Scripture closes, no terror for the authorities of the Church of Rome—"If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book, and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away His part out of the Book of Life and out of the Holy City, and from the things that are written in this book?"

What a difference there is between God's Ten Commandments and Rome's six! Put any two of them together and the contrast is striking. The puerility and littleness of the one code strike one as forcibly and immediately as the lofty dignity and moral grandeur of the other.

II. But we are specially concerned here with the Fourth Commandment. As to it—

(a.) We have already noticed that but a little bit of it is recognised by the Church of Rome—only the opening words. By what authority does she withhold the rest of it from her people?

(b.) Her theory of Sabbath observance may be gathered from the following further quotation from Butler—

"Q. Say the third Commandment.

A. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

Q. What is commanded by the Third Commandment?

A. To spend the Sunday in prayer and other religious duties.

Q. Which are the chief duties of religion in which we should spend the Sunday?

A. Hearing mass devoutly, attending vespers or evening prayers, reading moral and pious books, and going to Communion.

Q. Is the hearing of mass sufficient to sanctify the Sunday?

A. No; a part of the day should also be given to prayer and other good works.

Q. What particular good works are recommended to sanctify the Sunday?

A. The works of mercy, spiritual and corporal, and particularly to instruct the ignorant in the way of salvation, by word and example.

Q. What is forbidden in the Third Commandment?

A. All unnecessary servile work, and whatever may hinder the due observance of the Lord's day or tend to profane it.

Q. Is the sin the greater by being committed on the Lord's Day?

A. Most certainly."

In another Catechism, widely used in Ireland, "The Catechism ordered by the National Synod of Maynooth and approved by the Cardinal, the Archbishops, and the Bishops of Ireland," there is a slight difference as regards the directions for Sabbath observance. As the subject is important, we give its teaching on the subject in full:—

“Q. What is commanded by the Third Commandment?

A. We are commanded by the Third Commandment to sanctify the Sunday by prayer and other religious duties.

Q. Which is the chief duty of religion by which we are to sanctify the Sunday?

A. The chief duty of religion, by which we should sanctify the Sunday, is the hearing of mass devoutly.

Q. What other good works are particularly recommended to sanctify the Sunday?

A. The other particular good works recommended to sanctify the Sunday are to attend vespers or evening devotions, to read pious books, and to perform the works of mercy, spiritual and corporal, particularly to

instruct the ignorant in the way of salvation, both by word and example.

Q. What is forbidden by the Third Commandment.

A. The Third Commandment forbids all unnecessary servile work on Sunday, and whatever may hinder the due observance of the Lord's Day or may tend to profane it."

Butler's Catechism tells us (1) that the Third Commandment requires us to "spend the Sunday in prayer and other religious duties." The Maynooth Catechism says we are commanded to "sanctify" the day by these. There is a great difference between the two statements. The one necessarily takes in the entire day, the other may or may not, as the reader pleases. Butler (2) places the hearing of mass along with other duties, in the same category. The Maynooth manual makes the hearing of mass "the chief duty of religion by which we are to sanctify the Sunday." Other good works are only "particularly recommended," and, while in most parts this Catechism is only a reprint of Butler, its compilers have deliberately left out the question and answer,—“Is the hearing of mass sufficient to sanctify the Sunday? No; a part of the day should also be given to prayer and other good works,” and also the question and answer—“Is the sin the greater by being committed on the Lord's Day? Most certainly.” This last catechism bears the date 1883, and has on the title-page the *imprimatur* of Cardinal M'Cabe, the recently deceased Roman Catholic primate of Ireland. It is therefore to be taken as containing the latest teaching of the Romish Church in this country. That teaching is quite in accordance with what all who have studied the recent history and developments of Romanism in the Green Isle know—viz., that it lays the great stress on the hearing of mass. Everything else is subordinated to that. It is the chief duty of the Sabbath, which, once performed,



the worshipper may spend the remainder of the day as he pleases.

(c.) There is this further to be said of the teaching of Rome on the subject, that she grievously weakens the foundations of the Sabbath by the manner in which she multiplies her holy-days of various kinds, and ranks them along with or above the Sabbath. Both depend, according to her, on the authoritative tradition of the Church for their authority. Cardinal Bellarmine argues that it must be allowable in the true Church to make Saints' Days of human appointment binding on the conscience, because, otherwise, the Church would have no sacred days at all, since none whatever are enjoined in the New Testament! From the fact, thus admitted by Bellarmine, that no holy-days are enjoined in the New Testament, might we not have expected a somewhat different conclusion to be drawn, viz., that a Church which desires to conform itself to the pattern shown in the Word would also have no holy-days? Not so the Church of Rome, however. She classes "Sundays" and "holy-days of obligation" together. Thus Butler says (Cat. p. 39):

"Q. What are your first and chief duties on Sundays and kept holy-days?

A. To hear mass devoutly, and in every other respect to keep them holy.

Q. Is it a mortal sin not to hear mass on a Sunday or a kept holy-day?

A. It is, if the omission be culpable.

Q. How are we to keep holy-days?

A. As we should keep Sundays."

The holy Sabbath is therefore no more to the Romanist than Ash Wednesday or Good Friday or Christmas Day. Practically, indeed, it stands on a much lower platform. But, in its foundation, it is just the same. Now, see how this operates. The Sabbath being just a holy-day, like any other, has, of

course, just the same amount of sanctity. The Almighty, therefore, is simply entitled to the same homage on Sunday that St. Bridget or St. Denis receives on a Saint's day. He is degraded to the level of the multitude of men and women whom Rome has canonised—that wondrous bevy, some of whom are altogether mythical and others such remarkable specimens of sainthood, if history speaks truly, that it would be well if they were mythical too. What an insult is thereby offered to the One object of worship need not be dwelt upon. But more, the holy-day being particularly a day of pleasure, after the morning observance required by the Church has been attended to, the Holy Day—the Sabbath—is naturally and logically enough concluded to be the same, and, hence, we have the secret of that half-day, or less than half-day, regard for the Sabbath which is characteristic of all Romish countries, and all Romish districts of Protestant countries. This leads us to notice—

(*d.*) The practical teaching of Rome on this subject of the Sabbath. Reading her views in the catechisms from which we have been quoting, especially in Butler's, one might think that in some respects she had a high ideal of the Sabbath. He speaks of spending the day "in prayer and other religious duties," and certain "particular good works" are also recommended to be done upon the Lord's Day. But teaching and practice do not always coincide, and it is an open secret that in this matter of Sabbath observance the practice of the Romish communion is very far, indeed, from being a sanctification of the entire day. The hearing of mass is the great duty. No good Catholic neglects that. But, mass over, the rest of the day is practically free, and, as a rule, Roman Catholics feel at liberty to devote the remaining hours to recreation. You will find nothing worthy of being called Sabbath observance in Romish countries. The day is simply a holi-

day—sometimes not even that. Take France as an example. What Sabbath is to be found there? Yet what protest is heard from the Romish Church in France against the theatres and horse races and concerts and open shops which are the rule on the Day of Rest? Or go to the South and West of Ireland. There Romanism is dominant. It has moulded the character and tinctured the life of the great mass of the people for centuries, and it rules them still. What Sabbath has it given them? None worthy of the name. Recent years have exhibited this characteristic of Romanism in a very repulsive light. The Sabbath has usually been the chosen day for the monster meetings of the Land League, and its successor, the National League. The parish priest has come from the celebration of mass to attend these gatherings, and has listened while the vilest theories have been advocated by “sons of the Church.” Disloyalty, sedition, robbery, and murder have been preached as sacred duties, and all this on the day which, according to the authoritative Catechism, authorised by the four archbishops, is to be spent in “prayer and other religious duties.” A beautiful correspondence truly between the teaching and the practice of the infallible Church! Worse still, the Sabbath has been selected as the day for the commission of some of the most appalling murders which have disgraced the name of Irishman during the late “reign of terror” in this country. It was on the Sabbath, when returning from Church, that Mrs. Barlow Smythe of Barbavilla was shot dead in her carriage by Romish emissaries of the Land League, the fiendish wretches seeming to have determined to give their deed the additional horror of being committed when all around spoke of peace and heaven; and we have not heard of any denunciation of this crime, committed by sons of “Holy Mother Church,” being uttered by any of the Romish autho-

rities. The informer Carey repeatedly swore, during the trials of the "Invincibles" in Dublin, that he went directly from mass or confession to his infamous work of murder. The fact is, that whatever her outward or formal teaching may be, the Church of Rome has no Sabbath worthy of the name, and, because she has none, the mass of her devotees wallow in such an ignorance of God as leaves them a ready prey to designing agitators.

Let any one compare Ulster, which the hands of sturdy Presbyterians have transformed from a bleak morass into a fertile garden, and which their teaching and example and influence have endowed with the priceless blessing of quiet and well kept Sabbaths, with Connaught, where Popery has reigned supreme for many generations,—let him contrast Scotland, with her sweet Sabbath-keeping, which is undoubtedly one of her greatest glories, as it has been one of the most fertile sources of her intelligence and religious stability, with Spain or France, where a Sabbath, in the true sense, is unknown, and he must acknowledge that there is more than a coincidence in the fact that the Sabbath-keeping peoples are the intelligent and prosperous and loyal peoples. Experience teaches that, in another sense than that meant by the sacred writer, he that offends in this one point is guilty of all, while in the keeping of this Fourth Commandment there is the great reward that it is usually found accompanied by the keeping of all the rest. It has been beautifully said that the Sabbath is the ring which marries Creation to the Creator. Let that marriage ring be dishonoured, or broken, or thrown away, and who can wonder if the laws and the love of God are all forgotten or cast off?

## CHAPTER XI.

### *HINTS ON SABBATH OBSERVANCE.*

**I**N what mode should the Sabbath be observed? The New Testament does not lay down any specific laws nor go into any minute details on the subject. It does not specify precisely what things are proper to be done on the Sabbath, and what things are improper. This is not its practice. It is characteristically a book, not of details, but of principles, which can easily be gathered from it by the diligent inquirer, and the proper working out of those principles into detail gives the full mind of the Holy Ghost. With regard to this question of Sabbath observance, there is in the New Testament no table of things prohibited, or of things allowed, on the Sabbath. Herein the Christian Sabbath stands in a remarkably different position from the Jewish. Under the Ceremonial and Judicial laws of the Old Testament, the proper observance of the day was hedged in by a series of stringent regulations, the breach of which was punishable by severe penalties. There is nothing of all this in the New Testament. It gives us great principles on the subject, and great principles only, leaving their application to the individual conscience. The advantages of this course are obvious. Some might imagine that it would have been better if it had been strictly and precisely laid down in full detail how the Sabbath is to be spent. They might think that if men had placed before them, on the authority of the

Word of God, the precise path in which they are to walk on the Sabbath Day, they would at once walk in it, whereas now, it may be argued, time and study are required to find out what is the correct mode of keeping the Sabbath, and opinions may and do differ as to many particular details thereof. A little careful reflection, however, will suffice to show that God's plan is best. No code of Sabbath observance, no matter how comprehensive, could cover every possible case. Regulations which would have suited the first century would have been found quite inadequate to meet the circumstances of the nineteenth. Rules good for an Oriental nation would be quite unsuitable for Western peoples. Therefore, no matter how full the Sabbath code might be, it would continually occur that men, finding no regulation applicable to their particular case, would be left to themselves to decide as to the right course. Besides, no field for the free action of responsibility would be left by the plan we are speaking of, and men, finding themselves treated as mere children, would be apt to become children again, whereas, under the system adopted by Supreme Wisdom, no case can possibly arise which is not met. The principles laid down in the New Testament, or which can readily be formulated from the information which it supplies, cover the entire ground, while, at the same time, full scope is left for each individual to exercise his judgment in the discovery of the mind of God, and he is left, as a responsible moral agent, to regulate his conduct, as in the sight of God, in accordance with these principles.

The great principle, according to which Sabbath observance should be regulated, is plainly this,—it should be kept by every man as a day of holy rest for himself, and so as not to interfere with its being kept as a day of holy rest by others. The Divine enactments combine with the necessities of our own experience to

demand this twofold care, and it will be found that, by carefully seeking to do nothing ourselves on the Sabbath inconsistent with the idea of a holy Rest-Day, and by taking care to demand no service from others which would be at variance with the same idea, while, positively, we seek to enter into the spirit of the command, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy," and lead others to do the same, we shall best conform to the will of our great Lawgiver.

That some Sabbath work is unavoidable is obvious. In our houses it is impossible to dispense altogether with the services of domestics on that day, and public requirements necessitate the employment of the police and other officials. For ministers of the Gospel, also, instead of the Sabbath being a day of rest, it is the day of hardest work of all the week. All such cases are covered by the principle which our Lord lays down in the words—"It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath Day." There is in the law of the Sabbath no such narrow Pharisaic tone as would turn the day into a time of stern asceticism, or privation, or gloomy austerity. On the contrary, it is intended to be, in the highest sense, a day of joy. There is full liberty to do all works which can be ranged under the heads of works of necessity or mercy, either to man or beast? What is required is a generous consideration of the right of all parties concerned, a consideration of them in the light of God's law and Christ's example, not forgetting that important master-key, which opens so many locks whose intricate wards baffle all other modes of dealing with them—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets."

One thing is clear, if the Sabbath is to be enjoyed and thoroughly profited by, it must be prepared for. But how often this is forgotten! Let any one take a walk, for example, through the business streets of any

of our large towns on Saturday evening—let him note the crowds of people that throng the footways and fill the shops, up till ten, eleven, even twelve o'clock—let him remember that many of these purchasers have still household duties to perform on their return to their homes, and that the unfortunate shopkeepers and their assistants have the same, and he must see how difficult it will be for all these people to get into a right frame either of mind or body for the duties and privileges of the Sabbath. It is not our province here to speak of the disadvantages under which shopping is conducted at these untimely hours. Goods cannot be correctly judged in the flaring gas-light, as the housekeeper sometimes finds to her cost when Sabbath morning's sun shines on her purchases. Then the head of the house, who frequently accompanies his wife on these Saturday night shopping expeditions, is too often tempted by the brilliantly lighted windows of the public-house to turn in and refresh himself with a glass—the one glass which, in so many cases, proves the prelude to a drunken orgie. But, leaving all this out of account, what we are concerned to urge here is the entire incompatibility of such a mode of spending the late hours of Saturday night with the prospect of a comfortable and profitable Sabbath. Begin with the shopkeeper and his assistants. When they are able to retire to rest in the small hours of the Sabbath morning they are utterly fagged and worn out. Naturally they sleep late and rise with the remnant of the fatigues of the previous day still upon them. It is a scramble (sometimes an impossibility) to get the children to Sabbath School in time—another scramble (sometimes another impossibility) to get to church. Probably it is reached late, and the service is entered upon without that calm and reverent mental attitude which is so needful for the proper and profitable enjoyment of the ministra-



tions of the sanctuary. The occupations of the entire day are marred by the remains of the weariness of that Saturday night. With the shopkeeper's customer, matters are not much better. Now why should not the system of the early closing of shops and other places of business on Saturday night be more generally adopted? Why should not householders endeavour to lay in their stock of needful goods at a more seasonable hour? It would unquestionably be better for their pockets if they did so. But not on this ground—on the ground of consideration for their toil-worn sisters and brothers in these shops, who are kept standing behind the counter for twelve, fourteen, or sixteen hours every Saturday, accommodating customers up till a late hour who in most cases could have done their marketing quite as conveniently long before—and on the ground of regard for themselves and their own best interests and those of their families, we plead for this reform.\* We see no reason in the world why, in the vast majority of cases, all shops could not be closed by six o'clock on Saturday evening. Then the Sabbath would have a chance of being properly prepared for. Everything could then be got into readiness for giving a right loyal greeting to the King's messenger on his arrival—got into readiness in such good time, that, instead of retiring to rest wearier than on other nights, a foretaste of the rest of the Day of Rest would be enjoyed beforehand—Sabbath morning would awake the slumberer from a sleep that would be indeed refreshing—an early and united gathering round the family altar would attune all

\* The earlier closing of public-houses on Saturday would be a great boon in this connection. Already in Scotland an Act for their earlier closing every night in the week has come into operation. Throughout almost the whole of the country (except, alas! the large towns, where the reform is most needed), they are now obliged to shut up at ten o'clock.

hearts for the duties of the day—the House of Prayer would be sought in good time—and the Word of the Lord would drop upon the soul like the dew of Hermon. Nothing on earth is likely to be well done unless prepared for. The Sabbath is no exception to the rule.\*

The writer has before his mind, as he pens these words, the recollection of such a home, of which he knew something in days gone by. From Saturday morning in that home the Sabbath was seen to be approaching. Everything was got in readiness for it betimes. All purchases of household necessities were made early, all preparatory household duties performed, the children taught to put away their toys and week-day story-books, and provide supplies for pets, that the Sabbath might be clear of all temptation. Well does he recollect the peculiarly fervent prayers that were offered up at the family altar that evening. They were probably longer than usual—certainly there was an aroma about them above ordinary. The children were early abed, for on Sabbath morning there was no shortening of the day by undue indulgence in slumber in that house. If no earlier astir on that morning than usual, the family was no later. They were taught to give God honestly a day of the same length as they gave themselves. Then, if the Saturday night's family prayer was peculiarly impressive and solemn—what is to be said of the Sabbath morning's, so full of a holy unction, but yet with an infinite spirit of happiness about it—an air

\* During the last illness of the late General Grant, Ex-President of the United States of America, one Saturday night, when he was nervous and weary and restless, his son, hoping to divert his mind, suggested some amusement. The General brightened at the idea of diversion, but presently, with a grave face, he inquired the hour. It was nearly midnight. "Never mind," he said, with perfect resignation, "it is too close to the Sabbath to commence any diversion."

of true enjoyment, as if a day had indeed come, on which, not in mere conventional phrase, but in blessed reality, we were to "rejoice and be glad." Then came the walk to church—no hurried race as if to catch a train, but a quiet, seemly journey to the House of God, even the young folks needing no repressive measure to curb them, so well had they imbibed the spirit which breathed from their parents. Then the service—how well one can recall it—is it merely "distance that lends enchantment to the view?" Does the beauty with which it shines back upon us come only of the mellowing effect of the receding vista of years through which the scene is viewed? Or, were these Sabbaths of long ago really brighter than the Sabbaths of to-day? Who can tell? To the writer it seems as if, listening to the footsteps of those Sabbaths of other years, as they echo through the corridors of time, passing ever further and further away until they seem lost in the distance, there have been no such Sabbaths since. How blessed were the gatherings round the social board that day! A happy light seemed to sit on every face. It was a resting day in truth. And then its closing hours at night! One can almost hear again the strains of that Sabbath evening psalm:

"The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want,"

sung to old Martyrdom, or

"I to the hills will lift mine eyes,"

to French, or

"O thou my soul, bless God the Lord,"

to plaintive and wild old Coleshill. Then all retired to rest—not glad that the Sabbath was over. There was no such feeling. It was a happy day, and all the memories it left behind were happy too. Why should

not a Sabbath of such a type be the rule, and not the exception? What a brighter, better world we should have, if its highways were all hung along with such Sabbath lamps, shedding their soft light on the wayfarer as he moves forward towards the great bright Light at the further end! \*

Robert Burns ought to be forgiven many a fault by his countrymen for the sake of his glorious "Cotter's Saturday Night." What could be more beautiful or more suggestive than these lines, which cannot be too often repeated—

"The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,  
 They round the ingle form a circle wide;  
 The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,  
 The big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride.  
 His bonnet reverently is laid aside,  
 His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare;  
 Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide  
 He wales a portion wi' judicious care,  
 And 'Let us worship God' he says wi' solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise:  
 They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim:  
 Perhaps 'Dundee's' wild, warbling measures rise,  
 Or plaintive 'Martyrs,' worthy of the name;  
 Or noble 'Elgin' beets the heavenward flame,

\* "We are citizens of two worlds. The majority of souls are not here on the lonely shore that we call the earth. They are in the unseen holy places awaiting us. One day in seven is not too much time in which to educate ourselves for the world into which we haste. Let us ask what it is that the great cloud of souls above us longs most to hear from the earth. Is it the sound of the pick-axe in the mine; the whirl of the wheel in the factory, wearing out the life of childhood or of womanhood; the clink of dollars in the tills of capitalists? My conviction is that when those of whom we have been bereaved look backward and remember our low estate, what they wish most of all is to see the globe enswathed from pole to pole with holy Sabbaths, and shedding saved souls into the spaces beyond death."—*Joseph Cook.*

The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays :

Compared with these Italian trills are tame ;  
The tickled ears no heartfelt raptures raise,  
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's name.

The priestlike father reads the sacred page,  
How Aaron was the friend of God on high ;  
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage  
With Amalek's ungracious progeny ;  
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie  
Beneath the stroke of heaven's avenging ire ;  
Or Job's pathetic plaint and wailing cry,  
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire ;  
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps, the Christian volume is the theme—  
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed ;  
How He who bore in Heaven the second name  
Had not on earth whereon to lay His head ;  
How His first followers and servants sped,  
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land ;  
How He who lone in Patmos banished  
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,  
And heard great Babylon's doom pronounced by Heaven's  
command.

Then kneeling down to Heaven's eternal King,  
The saint, the father, and the husband prays.  
Hope springs exulting on triumphant wing  
That thus they all shall meet in future days ;  
There ever bask in uncreated rays,  
No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear,  
Together hymning their Creator's praise,  
In such society, yet still more dear,  
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere."

A Saturday night like that could scarce fail to be  
followed by a Sabbath of blessing.

## CHAPTER XII.

### *SUNDAY TRADING.*

THE times in which we live have seen many changes with regard to the observance of the Day of Rest. In some respects we have unquestionably advanced. In others we have as certainly retrograded. Let us, in this chapter, glance at what has been done and is being done in regard to Sunday trading.

One of the most important social reforms of our day has been the Sunday Closing of Public Houses. The present position of this movement is as follows:—Scotland occupies the premier place, not only in point of time, but of thoroughness. She led the van of the army of progress, having been the first of the three kingdoms to demand and obtain from the Legislature the boon of Sunday closing, and she enjoys it in the completest manner. Ireland comes next. In 1878 she obtained her Sunday Closing Act, but it is one by no means so complete as the Scotch. It is marred by an “exemption clause” which permits the opening of public-houses on the Lord’s Day during the hours from 2 till 7 P.M. in the five cities of Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, and Waterford, and by a “*bona fide* traveller” clause which presents a ready door for the evasion of the requirements of the law. Wales is also now in the enjoyment of a Sunday Closing law, having been the last of the three countries mentioned to obtain it. England has not yet followed in the wake of her

sister kingdoms, and it is surely a pity that she, the most powerful and influential and populous of them all, should be the last to procure for herself, and to enjoy, this boon of freedom from the open Sunday tavern. There are not wanting signs of the existence of a most earnest desire, in this direction, on the part of large portions of the English community.\* We trust that ere long the convictions of the entire country will be so aroused that a law will be obtained, extending the Acts which have wrought so well in Scotland and Ireland to England. It may hearten and stimulate advocates of this course to give here the results of the five years' experiment of Sunday Closing in Ireland. They are as follows:—"1st. A decrease of Sunday arrests in the Sunday Closing area of 53 per cent. 2nd. A decrease on a smaller scale in Sunday arrests in the five cities on the short time system. 3rd. A reduction in the drink bill of the nation amounting to 5½ millions of pounds sterling, comparing the quinquennial period before Sunday closing with the same period following it. 4th. A very great decrease in the arrests for general drunkenness."† Surely there is here a most gratifying and encouraging result. When it was first proposed to try Sunday Closing in Ireland, many and emphatic were the prophecies of failure, and

\* The following statement, showing the number of licenses issued for the sale of intoxicating liquors, to be consumed on the premises, in England, Scotland and Ireland respectively, in the year ended March 31st, 1887, distinguishing the ordinary seven-day licenses from those issued for sale on six days only, speaks for itself.

NUMBER OF LICENSES ISSUED.			
	Ordinary 7 day.	For sale 6 days only.	Total.
England . .	102,647	4,811	107,458
Scotland . .	1,851	5,905	7,756
Ireland . .	13,342	3,680	17,022
United Kingdom	117,840	14,396	132,236

† *A Social Experiment; or, Five Years before and after Sunday Closing in Ireland*, by T. W. Russell, M.P.

worse than failure, to which we were treated, sometimes by men high in authority. We were told that the people would never bear it—that riots would occur—that “shebeens” would increase—that instead of advancing the cause of sobriety and public morality, such an act would seriously damage both. The few figures quoted above show how signally these Cassandra-like predictions have been falsified.

While speaking of the Sunday Closing of public houses, it is too frequently forgotten that there are many shops for the sale of other commodities than drink which are deliberately kept open on the Day of Rest. In London this evil has grown to a sad magnitude. In some parts of it regular fairs are held on the Lord’s Day, while in others the spectacle of the open shop is so common as scarcely to be noticed. Confectioners, small grocers and tobacconists are the most common offenders. Nor is the evil confined to London. There is probably not a town of any considerable size in the United Kingdom which does not suffer from it to a greater or less extent. Scotland, owing to the higher sentiment on the subject of the Sabbath which happily prevails north of the Tweed, is freer from it than the sister kingdom. But in Ireland the Romish districts exhibit, as might be expected, the maximum of transgression of this Sabbath law. It has often been a subject of wonder to the writer that more strenuous efforts are not made to cope with the evil. The opening of shops on the Lord’s day is illegal. Why, then, when we agitate so earnestly for the enactment of measures for the closing of taverns on that day, we do not take active steps to have the existing law for the closing of other shops enforced? This has been done in various places with varying degrees of success. Why should it not be systematically attempted everywhere by the friends of the Day of Rest? If, as is often justly argued, the



publican has no more right than the grocer or other shopkeeper to sell on the Sabbath, conversely it ought to be urged, in these days of widespread and fast spreading Sunday closing, that the grocer has no more right than the publican to keep his shop open—that if the law obliges the latter to suspend business on the sacred day, the old Lord's Day Act, which has been long upon the statute-book, ought to be made to compel the former to do the same. In London the returns of the City Mission for a recent year showed that during the year no fewer than 10,453 shops were found open on the Lord's Day out of 38,032 visited.\* In Glasgow it appears from a census taken by the police that there are 2,419 shops doing business on the same day. We have not seen any similar statistics for other towns, but these figures for the two we have mentioned may be sufficient to show the magnitude and wide-spread nature of the evil. Much might be done to diminish it by moral suasion and by the diffusion of right views on the subject of Sabbath trading. In London 95 per cent. of the shopkeepers visited expressed a desire for the suppression of the system. In Geneva, by the power of moral suasion alone, 300 Sabbath-opening shops have been closed, many of these being the establishments of watchmakers, employing thirty or forty workmen each. The same thing could be done in other places if the matter were but taken up with the same zeal. It is a sad truth that the cause of the Sabbath often suffers as much from the apathy of its friends as from the activity of its foes.


The progress of Sunday Closing is one of the hopeful signs of the times, both in relation to Temperance and to the Sabbath. Amid so much that is discouraging in the tone and temper of the age, let us thankfully

\* If all the shops that are open in the metropolis on Sunday were placed side by side, they would form one continuous row SIXTY MILES LONG!

acknowledge the great advance which has been made in this direction in the last half-century, and let us labour on until, over the entire British Isles, no tavern nor other shop shall, by its open doors, defy the God of the Sabbath, and tempt the wayfarer to break His laws.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### SUNDAY PLEASURING.

F late, determined efforts have been made in several quarters to obtain the opening of public Museums, Picture-galleries and Libraries on the Lord's Day. In some few cases the efforts have, unfortunately, been successful, but happily, in the majority of instances they have failed. The plea on which the demand for their opening is based is a specious one, and it may be well to spend a few minutes in examining it. The plea is urged in the interest of the working-man. (It is wonderful how many requests are urged in these days in the interest of the working-man, not by himself but by loving friends (?) on his behalf!) It is said by these friends of his, that visits to picture-galleries and museums and libraries are calculated to exercise an elevating and refining influence on the people—that they would prove a counter-attraction to the public-houses, that the working classes have not the opportunity of visiting such places on week days—and that, while the rich have their own libraries and collections of paintings and articles of *vertu*, it would only be fair to allow the toiling thousands of our large cities the opportunity of refining their tastes, and cultivating their sense of the beautiful, and improving their minds, by visiting collections which are maintained at the public expense. This is putting in the strongest form what is said in favour of this movement. It sounds well in

the ears of many people. But we do not hesitate to denounce the whole of it as a tissue of sophistry, well-meant sophistry, calculated, if acted on, to result in the utmost injury to that very working-man in whose interest the change is demanded. For—

(1.) If the principles contended for in the foregoing pages be sound, then the Sabbath is God's Day, to be kept holy to Him in the manner which He has appointed. Where do we read in the Scriptures that among the recognised modes of worshipping Him is the contemplation of the stuffed specimens of the museum or of the *chef-d'œuvres* of the Academy, or the spending of hours over the pages of *Punch* in the reading-room of the public library?

(2.) The working classes, as a body, to their credit be it said, have made no demand for the opening of Museums, Picture-galleries and Libraries on the Sabbath. On the contrary, in tens of thousands, they have signed petitions against the movement. So far as their wishes have been, or can be ascertained, they are therefore not in its favour. Take one illustration of this. A remarkable document was published in May, 1883,—entitled—"Working class organisations and the Sunday opening of Museums. List of 2,412 trade unions, friendly societies, working men's clubs and institutes and other working class organisations, having 501,705 members, who have approved the following amendment, proposed by Mr. Henry Broadhurst, M.P., in the House of Commons, on the 19th May, 1882—"That in the opinion of this House it is undesirable that Parliament should further promote the employment of Sunday labour by authorising the opening of national museums and galleries which are now closed on that day, but that such museums should be open between the hours of 6 and 10 P.M. on at least three evenings in each week.'"

The force of this document lies not only in the abso-

lute number of organisations and votes, but in its comparison of those organisations and votes with the result of an earnest effort, continued for several months by a committee in London, to secure votes on the other side. The comparison gives the following result—Against Sunday opening, 2,412 organisations with 501,705 members. For Sunday opening, 62 organisations with 45,482 members. These figures show with sufficient plainness the opinion of the classes chiefly concerned in the matter. Would it not be well for those who are making this movement in the name of the working classes to drop it until the working classes themselves press for the change?

(3.) As suggested in Mr. Broadhurst's resolution, one would have more faith in the *bona fides* of these *soi-disant* friends of the working-man if, instead of seeking to rob God in his interest, they were found agitating for the granting of an extra weekly half-holiday for this purpose, or for the opening of these museums at other times convenient to working people. They and we will be quite at one if they but fix on some other day than the Sabbath for an experiment in the matter.

(4.) We object strenuously to this proposal because one of its first effects would necessarily be to lay additional burdens on working-men. In every picture gallery, or other public building, that would be opened on the Sabbath the attendants would have Sabbath labour imposed upon them. Porters, cleaners, caretakers, librarians, curators, assistants, police, must all be on duty. Trams, buses, cabs, trains and other conveyances must be employed to carry the visitors to and from the buildings. In a word, an army of hard-wrought persons, varying in number according to the scale on which the proposal is carried out, must be deprived of their Sabbath rest, turned into Sabbathless white slaves, that their fellows may enjoy themselves.

We entirely mistake the character of the British working-man if, when this feature of the plan is made clear to him, he does not repudiate all connection with it, in even stronger language than he has yet used, and refuse to have anything to do with the promotion of a system which would most assuredly have the effect of rivetting the fetters of incessant, unrelieved toil upon a large body of his comrades, that he might enjoy himself at their expense.\*

(5.) We object to this proposal in the interest of the working-man because the sure tendency of turning the Sabbath into a day of pleasure, in whole or in part, will be to turn it by-and-by into a day of work. Once admit the principle that, wholly or partially, the Lord's Day may be turned into a day of amusement, and what is to stand in the way of its being used as a day of toil? Nothing. At present the sacred character of the day protects it. It is the Sabbath of the Lord, on which "thou shalt not do any work." Tamper with that sacred character—relax the obligations of God's law, let the hours of the Sabbath be filched away piecemeal in the interests of pleasure, and, when it is too late, the working-men of Britain may awake to the fact that they have opened the door to a flood whose onset they cannot resist. No class in the land has such a stake in the Sabbath as the working class. We speak in their interest when we say that, of all men, it behoves them to be most watchful and determined in its defence. They are the greatest

\* When Mr. Benjamin Lucraft, one of the most trusted leaders of the working classes, and the labour candidate for the Tower Hamlets at the general election of 1880, was asked at one of his meetings if he would vote for the Sunday opening of Museums, he replied: "I look upon the question purely from a workman's point of view, and I should not like to work seven days a week instead of six, therefore I cannot vote for opening museums on Sunday."

gainers by its existence. They have most to lose by its loss.\*

Speaking on this subject, Dr. Andrew Thomson of Edinburgh said in 1876, before the first General Council of the Presbyterian Churches—"The history of our country and our working-men would (in the case supposed) resemble that of Samson. It would be a tragedy in three acts. The first act would be the working-man resting, like Samson, in the lap of sensual pleasure. The second would present him grinding at the wheel and treading his monotonous round of work, work, work, amid intellectual darkness and moral night. And, when once this was the case, might not the third act of the gloomy tragedy be expected soon to follow, and the working-man be seen seizing the pillars of the social edifice and involving himself and his oppressors in a common ruin?" Words as true as they are eloquent! May they be hearkened to in time!†

\* The words of John Stuart Mill have become a Sabbath proverb: "Operatives are perfectly right in thinking that if there were no Sunday rest, seven days' work would have to be given for six days' pay."

† Mr. Samuel Smiles says—"What the so-called friends of the working-classes are aiming at in England has already been effected in France. The public museums and galleries are open on Sundays, but you look for the working people there in vain. They are at work in the factories, whose chimneys are smoking as usual, or building houses, or working in the fields, or they are engaged in the various departments of labour. The Government works all go on as usual on Sundays. The railway trains run precisely as on week-days. In short, the Sunday is secularised or regarded but as a partial holiday. As you pass through the country on Sundays, you see the people toiling in the fields. Their continuous devotion to bodily labour without a seventh day's rest, cannot fail to exercise a deteriorating effect upon their physical as well as their moral condition, and this, we believe, it is which gives to the men—and especially to the women of the country—the look of a prematurely old and overworked race."—*The Huguenots*.

(6.) We object to this proposal, again, because it deals with man as a mere animal, to be amused and cultured, and leaves out of sight altogether that he has a soul to be lost or saved. If we were nothing but animals, the proposal would be an excellent one. By all means "let us eat and drink" and spend our Sabbaths in the museum and picture-gallery, "for tomorrow we die." But, if the Bible is true, we have not only bodies to be rested, and minds to be developed, and tastes to be cultivated,—we have souls which are immortal, and no plan of spending the Sabbath is philanthropic or kind which does not take into account this tripartite nature of man, as God has taken it into account in His arrangements. The Sabbath was made "for man," not for a part of him merely, and that the lower part, but for the entire man, and no scheme of spending it can be satisfactory, or can commend itself to the conscience which is enlightened by the Word of God, which leaves this fact out of sight.

How many conversions are likely to be produced by a century of Sabbath visits to museums or picture galleries? "This method," an able writer has well said, "will approve itself to secularists, atheists, materialists, who believe that the temporal interest is all, who believe that there is no spiritual interest, that man has no soul within him, nor God above him, nor eternity before him. But if there be a spiritual interest, if man have a soul, a God, an immortality, their boasted reasoning is as follows:—There is a mine which contains some copper, much silver and gold, and one jewel of great price? The question is what is the best method of working the mine? And our adversaries answer, theirs is the best method, merely because (in their estimation) it will produce most copper, although it should produce little silver or gold, and should keep us for ever out of reach and sight of the precious jewel!"



It may, however, be said by those who advocate the recreations we speak of—"We do not propose that the whole of Sunday shall be spent in the museums or the picture galleries; we ask only the afternoons; the mornings will still be available for church." This looks plausible. But, when examined closely, it proves to be a very hollow and unsatisfactory argument. It comes from men who are not very active, to say the least, in the promotion of church-going, and whose whole movement wears the appearance of being the thin end of the wedge which is by-and-by, if they can manage it, to displace churches altogether from use. Sir Walter Scott truly said: "Give to the world one half of Sunday and you will find that religion has no strong hold of the other." We take the high ground, that no part of this day is ours to do what we please with. It is all God's, to be spent as He directs, and we find no provision for the picture-gallery or the museum in His arrangement.\*

(7.) We object to these and all similar proposals, because they are part of a general movement for the introduction of the Continental Sunday into Britain. On the Continent there is a movement to get back the Day of Rest. In Paris one now sees an increasing number of shops closed upon the Sabbath. In Berlin and other large centres of population there are signs

\* Mr. Henry Broadhurst, M.P., by trade a mason, in a discussion in the House of Commons on the opening of museums, said—"Now, it is perhaps perfectly true that, if you pass this resolution to-night, we shall not have the factory laws repealed next week. Nobody expects that the whole of our factories and workshops, our coal mines and ironstone mines, will be opened before the end of the session for Sunday labour. No. People, like nations, never lose their rights by one resolution, but they may be whittled away by resolution after resolution, and some fine morning the people may wake up and regret the day that they ever listened to a proposal, innocent enough on the face of it, but fraught with grievous and most certain danger, if not to them, at any rate to their children who come after them."

in the same direction. A late German Reichsrath passed a law regulating the hours of labour in shops, factories, and mines, and ordering that Sundays should be observed as days of rest, and the act is now in force, after the publication of a list of exceptions which the law authorised the Government to establish. Twenty-eight trades and professions are totally or partially exempted from the obligation to rest on the Sabbath. Twelve of these—butchers, bakers, innkeepers, etc.—are exempted under conditions. Seven, including the owners and drivers of public conveyances, have a total exemption for the public convenience. Printers and compositors have no exemption, so that the publication of Monday morning newspapers must cease unless the Government alters its decree. In general, all shops, except those of tobacconists, will have to be closed on Sundays. It will be a bad omen for us if, while our French and German neighbours, who have learnt by bitter experience the evils of the want of a Sabbath, are feeling after it, if haply they may find it, we commence the downward course which leads to the position from which they are anxious to escape. Let us have our picture-galleries, libraries, and museums open on the Day of Rest, bands in our parks, a general half-holiday look upon everything, and the next step will be the open theatre, the horse race—in a word, a complete breaking down of the safeguards of the day—a loss which to Britain would be incalculable. Such has been the progress of things elsewhere. In Chicago, first the public parks were opened on the Sabbath; next came bands of music to play in them; by-and-by Sunday base-ball matches were introduced; then Sunday theatrical performances, and the last development we have heard of (but will it be the last?) is the Sunday horse race, which the directors of the Driving Park have now resolved to introduce! The old adage

*obsta principiis* has nowhere greater wisdom embodied in it than in this controversy.

A Mr. Rossiter some time ago contributed a paper to the *Nineteenth Century* on "The Continental Sunday,"\* which is very instructive on this subject—though hardly in the direction in which its author intended it to bear. He considers the Continental Sunday a mere bugbear, used to frighten timid people by Sabbatarians. But certainly his pictures of it are very far from leading us to desire its introduction into the British isles. Open shops, "men going about with beer and paraffin on long drays," as in Berlin, an "eternal walking about" "the one great means of getting rid of Sunday," operas in full swing, bars and toystalls, conjuring exhibitions, men repairing gaspipes, or mending roads, or "taking a girder to a house in course of erection," "the number of people in the streets enormous, the trams and omnibuses crowded, the noise of voices, wheels, tram horses, very trying to any but robust ears; theatre doors crowded, fat pigs driven about by a man who was selling tickets for a lottery of which the pigs were to be the prizes"—these may seem desirable institutions to Mr. Rossiter, but we do not think that such pictures of the humours of the Continental Sunday are likely to prove appetising to any who have a regard either for the authority of God, or for the good of man, in these lands.

(8.) We object to these proposals because the argument sometimes used in their favour that the open museum and picture-gallery would lead people away from the public house and the beer shop is in our opinion utterly fallacious. Experience teaches us so. When a man is wearied he wants something to drink, and after the walk to and through the picture-gallery he is very likely to drop into the friendly public house

\* *Nineteenth Century* for 1884, p. 944.

to refresh himself, and be led into temptation, instead of out of it.\*

In truth, we can find nothing to be said in favour of this much vaunted, much pushed proposal, and very much to be urged against it. We are glad that hitherto it has received no sanction from Parliament, and we trust it will be long before it receives any. We be-

\* With all the supposed advantages of art collections on the Sunday, drunkenness is growing quickly and dangerously in Belgium, Italy, France, Switzerland, Holland, and Germany. We need not trace this growing drunkenness to the influence of pictures or statuary on the Sunday; it is sufficient to assert that pictures and statuary have not prevented its increase, nor cured it where it prevails. Dr. William M. Taylor says: "All this talk about the refining efficacy of art is a bit of the 'cant' of 'culture,' which is as disgusting as the cant which claims to be religious. It is withal positively ludicrous to any man who knows what Athens was morally in the very heyday of its artistic excellence, or who has studied the history of Rome under Nero, of Italy under the Pontificate of Leo X., or of France under Louis XIV. If the originals did so little in the refining line, the fragments and copies of them in our museums will do less." Mr. Hugh Mason, M.P., says: "When the picture-galleries in Manchester were opened on certain hours on Sunday, during that very period the apprehensions for drunkenness on Sunday were not fewer, but decidedly more numerous. Just as the places of amusement on the week days and evenings do not lessen drunkenness or empty the liquor shops; just as on the holidays, with every amusement in full play, the liquor-sellers reap their richest harvest; so would it be on the Sunday if it was filled with similar amusements." The late Earl Cairns, in a debate in the House of Lords on a proposal to open the national collections on Sunday afternoons till six o'clock, pointed out that that was *precisely the hour when the public-houses opened*, and as the people who visited the museums would probably come from a long distance, they would require a drink; and the *Dispatch*, commenting upon this argument, says: "That is by no means improbable; but surely, after spending a quiet and peaceful afternoon in the corridors and chambers of an art museum, to which he has tramped or driven several miles, the British workman is entitled to that refreshment which his animal wants dictate." Precisely so. The Sunday museum-opening and the Sunday-drinking would go hand in hand, as we have said.

lieve that not only is there no demand for it on the part of the people, but that there is a very strong feeling against it among the best portion of the nation, and we cannot resist the conviction, looking at the matter from every point of view, that to yield to the plausible fallacies of those who periodically raise an agitation on the subject would be a tremendous mistake in every way.

All that we have said regarding the opening of museums and picture-galleries applies with equal force to the movement which has culminated in the formation, and in the operations, of the Sunday Society. This organisation promotes the delivery of lectures on literary and scientific subjects in public halls on the Sabbath, and the giving of secular concerts on that day. It would only be to repeat ourselves to state the objections to its operations. In spirit and object the movement is similar to that which we have just been considering, and in many cases the promoters of the two are identical. "The danger for ourselves," says Mr. Frederick Spicer, the well-informed working man from whom we have already quoted, "is not that our rulers will ever be so mad as to pass a law doing away with the Sabbath, but that little by little, by permitting this secular amusement and then that on the Lord's Day, our people be made to lose that reverence for the Sabbath's sacred character which at present forms the greatest obstacle to Sunday becoming as an ordinary working day. Let us have nothing to do with this most mischievous movement. Our fathers have had the wisdom to preserve and hand down to us, in the One Day in Seven, a splendid heritage. Let us look to it, not merely for our own sake, but as a sacred duty which we owe to our children, that we do not fritter that heritage away, or take from it anything of its value. As workmen, it behoves us to stand firmly to our principles, and to say to those who would alter the

character of our English Sunday—and say it with no uncertain voice—that we cannot and will not surrender our one great privilege for any consideration whatever; but that, in this matter at all events, we mean to “hold that fast which we have,” and “let well alone.”\*

\* The Rev. Wm. Arthur writes of the Paris Sunday :—“ The moment you leave the Place de la Concorde you find in the Rue Royale shopmen and shopwomen behind the counter ; it is (not the Lord’s Day, but) the employer’s day. In the first bank you reach on the Boulevards, the clerks are at the desk ; it is the banker’s day. In the Faubourgs the mechanics are busy ; it is the manufacturer’s day. The Post-office is full of working men ; it is the merchant’s day. The Rue Rivoli rings with the mason’s hammer, it is the contractor’s day. In the Rue Montmartre the editors, reporters, and printers are all busy ; it is subscriber’s day. Turn where you will, every man is in his employer’s power, just as on other days. The chart of freedom is in no hand, the joy of freedom at no fireside.”

No wonder Mr. Frederick Spicer, a working compositor, after quoting some extracts like these, says : “ And this is what we in England—slavery-hating, Christian England—are to emulate ! And, above all, it is to be brought about in the interests of the working classes !! These extracts afford strong proof of the danger of admitting the principle of Sunday pleasuring in England. And I would ask my fellow-workmen if the picture presented is so fascinating that they would exchange their Sabbath repose for it ? ”—*Objections to Opening Museums, etc., on the Lord’s Day.*

## CHAPTER XIV.

### UNNECESSARY SABBATH TRAVELLING.

**S**ABBATH pleasure travelling has received a great development in recent years. The approach of summer is invariably heralded by announcements of cheap Sunday excursions by train and steamer, and, on the Sabbath afternoons, we have crowds of vehicles, hired by pleasure seekers to carry them, too often with noise and riot, into neighbouring villages and the surrounding country. What is to be said of this? Is it right? Is it in accordance with that law of God on the subject of the Sabbath which we have been considering? None of us wants to sin knowingly and wilfully against our Maker. If we are honest and true-hearted, we say, "Show us that we are wrong and we will at once amend our ways." Let us then see.

(1.) Notice the amount of cruelty inflicted in the name of pleasure by this traffic. Thousands of railway employes are kept hard at work by it on the Day of Rest—to them a sad misnomer.

"The Sunday shines no Sabbath day for them."

Other toilers can look forward during the week to the Sabbath, which will put a ratchet in the wheels of labour, stopping them for a day. But the Sunday train robs the railway servant of all this. In one unintermittent, unvarying round of dreary drudgery, he is compelled to toil on from week to week, that his fellowmen may enjoy themselves at his expense.

Stationmasters, porters, ticket-clerks, guards, engine-drivers, firemen, all must be on duty to serve the Sunday pleasure-seeker. God has given these men the Day of Rest. But man says, "No, you shan't have it. I'll chain you to your posts, that I may have my pleasure." God says, "In it thou shalt not do any work." "Yes, you shall work," says the Sabbath excursionist; "I must have my pleasure, cost you what it may." Oh, man's inhumanity to man!

Seldom is all this thought of. Especially, working men do not know what they are doing when they patronise these Sunday excursions. They are not ungenerous or unkind. I have seen their unselfishness. I have admired their charity. I know how they stand by one another in distress, and defend one another against oppression, and therefore I say, I cannot think that they are aware of the cruelty they are inflicting on their fellow working men when they encourage Sunday railway excursions, else I am sure they would not give them their countenance.

Listen to the following letter from a railway porter, which speaks for itself:—"Dear Sir,—Remembering the efforts you put forth on our behalf, I felt I could not refrain from letting you know not only the monstrous cruelty of which we railway men are the subjects, but to assure you of the sympathy and good-will we have toward you. This summer-time we have to work fifteen hours a day one week and thirteen the other,—meal times included, of course. To have to come on Sunday to work trains to carry people about, who, I have no doubt, a great number of them, finished work at twelve and one on Saturday, is, I feel it to be, a cruel shame; but even this is not the worst, it's the trying to break down and do away with the sanctity and rest and worship of the Sabbath which I, as a working man, so highly prize. Can anything more be done?"



Is it not cruel in the extreme that men should be subjected to such treatment? Yet we are contributing our share of it every time we indulge in the Sunday excursion. Is it just? Is it right?

But, it is sometimes said, the railway servant is paid for it, and if he does not like it he can give it up. Now, is it very moral and right to tempt a poor man, perhaps with wife and children depending on him for bread,—to put before him this semi-slavery (for the life of a railway employé on a line where Sunday excursion traffic is systematically carried on is little better than semi-slavery), on the one hand, and destitution on the other? In this case, too, it is the man's soul that he is tempted to sell, for part of the bargain necessarily, though tacitly, in many cases is that he shall turn his back on the ordinances of religion on the Sabbath. Perhaps he gets an hour or two of intermission from his labours—an hour or two where God has given him an entire day—a Sabbath in the three weeks or month, where his Maker has gifted him with one day in seven. Such is man's humanity to man, exercised in the bright name of pleasure!\*

Oh! but, it is replied, it is a law of nature that the few *must* suffer for the advantage of the many. The railway employé is no worse off than thousands of his fellowmen, who in various ways must endure hardships that others may reap advantage. Now this politico-economical argument is, no doubt, sound and good in its own sphere. But, in the case before us, you impose in its name a disability of a kind which you have no right whatever to inflict. You tempt a

“It will take about five years to clear them off,” said an observant master of an Ohio canal-boat, alluding to the wearing-out influences on the boatmen, who worked on the Sabbaths as well as on other days. As to the boatmen and firemen of the steamers on the Western rivers, which never lay by on Sabbaths, seven years is the average of life.”—*Hall's Journal of Health.*

man to sell you his birthright for a mess of pottage—you demoralise him—you make him a worse man—for what? For your pleasure. The principles of all the political economy in the world can never make this right. It is a crime alike against God and man. Modern society too often rolls along in its Juggernaut car, thoughtless of whom it crushes in its progress. But let anyone calmly think of these unhappy men, to whom no respite from toil comes any day of the seven—compelled to labour on the Day of Rest for the amusement of others. Listen to the language of one of themselves, as he pathetically gives vent to his feelings—

“ Torn from every tie that gladdens  
Every humble cottage hearth,  
Home a garden lies unweeded,  
Children, flow’rets that unheeded  
Rise uncultured from their birth.

Why, ye sordid sons of Mammon,  
Hew for brother man a tomb?  
Rob his children of the heaven  
He could make one day in seven  
Of his poor but happy home?

Know, ye worshippers of pleasure,  
While in haste along the line  
Like a Juggernaut you’re rolling,  
In your carriage listless lolling,  
Ye are crushing souls divine.”

Who that seriously reflects on it can defend such conduct? \*

(2.) The evil effects of the overwork of these poor

\* A few years since some 450 of his locomotive engineers petitioned Mr. William H. Vanderbilt for “the cessation of Sunday labour.” After pointing out how Sunday running had become “a great hardship,” they continue: “We have borne this grievance patiently, hoping every succeeding year that it would decrease. We are willing to submit to any reasonable privation, mental or physical, to assist the officers of your company to

railway employ es sometimes return with terrible force on the heads of the public who inflict the injury. The human machine cannot stand the wear and tear of endless, intermissionless toil. It was not constructed to stand it, and it cannot. The pointsman, on duty sometimes for fourteen hours out of the twenty-four,

achieve a financial triumph ; but, after a long and weary service, we do not see any signs of relief, and we are forced to come to you with our trouble, and most respectfully ask you to relieve us from Sunday labour, so far as it is in your power to do so. Our objections to Sunday labour are : First, This never-ending labour ruins our health and prematurely makes us feel worn out like old men, and we are sensible of our inability to perform our duty as well when we work to an excess. Second, That the customs of all civilised countries, as well as all laws, human and divine, recognise Sunday as a day of rest and recuperation ; and notwithstanding intervals of rest might be arranged for us on other days than Sunday, we feel that by so doing we would be forced to exclude ourselves from all church, family, and social privileges that other citizens enjoy. Third, *Nearly all of the undersigned have children that they desire to have educated in everything that will tend to make them good men and women, and we cannot help but see that our example in ignoring the Sabbath day has a very demoralising influence upon them.* Fourth, Because we believe the best interests of the company we serve, as well as ours, will be promoted thereby, and because we believe locomotive engineers should occupy as high social and religious positions as men in any other calling. We know the question will be considered — How can this Sunday work be avoided with the immense and constantly increasing traffic ? We have watched this matter for the past twenty years. We have seen it grow from its infancy until it has arrived at its now gigantic proportions, from one train on the Sabbath until we now have about thirty each way ; and we do not hesitate in saying that we can do as much work in six days, with the seventh for rest, as is now done.

“The question might also arise, if traffic is suspended twenty-four hours, will not the company lose one-seventh of its profits ? In answer, we will pledge our experience, health, and strength, that at the end of the year our employers will not lose one cent, but, on the contrary, will be the gainers financially. We ask you to aid us. Give us the Sabbath for rest after our week of laborious duties, and we pledge you that with a system invigo-

Sundays and week days, sleeps at his post as a train passes, and a collision is the result. Then a great outcry arises over the man's carelessness. Society is indignant. He is arrested, tried on a charge of manslaughter and found guilty, while those who, forgetful alike of duty to God and man, laid burdens on the poor fellow which he was not able to bear, escape, and after a little fuss has been made in the newspapers over the long-hour system, continue the oppression on a fresh victim. Men fail to recognise that neither the laws of nature, nor the laws of religion, can be violated with impunity. If I neglect the laws which regulate bodily health—if I breathe impure air—drink impure water—eat unwholesome food—deny myself proper exercise, I must suffer in health. If I violate the laws which my Maker has seen it necessary to exact for the regulation of the health of the entire man, body, soul, and spirit, laws like this law of the Sabbath, men are slow to perceive that the same inevitable result must ensue, sooner or later. Yet it must. Our blindness will not save us from the consequences of our sin. God keeps silence sometimes for long periods; but at times His silence is terribly broken, and He speaks in a voice of thunder sufficient to pierce the deafest ear, and startle the most obdurate heart, telling in emphatic tones of the great reward which attaches to the keeping of His commandments, and the equally awful penalty which menaces him who breaks even the least of them.

rated by a season of repose, by a brain eased and cleared by relaxation, we can go to work with more energy, more mental and physical force, and can and will accomplish more work and do it better, if possible, in six days than we can now do in seven. We can give you ten days in six if you require it, if we can only look forward to a certain period of rest."

That is a classic in the literature of capital and labour, and the refusal to grant it will be heard from on some judgment day, in this world or the other, or both.

(3.) We object to this pleasure traffic because it is a violation of God's law. Even though that law could be violated with impunity, the dishonour done to it and to its Divine Maker would be just the same.

"Remember," says the Fourth Commandment, "the Sabbath Day, to keep it *holy*." Some people seem in these days to have framed a new Fourth Commandment for themselves, running thus, "Remember the Sabbath Day, to make it merry." The question for us is—"Does the Sabbath excursion keep the day *holy*?" If so, by all means go on with it. But does it? As well contend that murder is not a breach of the Sixth Commandment, or impurity of the Seventh, or theft of the Eighth, as that Sabbath pleasure trips are not a breach of the Fourth. There is not an honest man among us, whatever defence he may make of them, who will venture to say that they are not.

(4.) We object to it because of the general and widely spread disregard of Sabbath duty which it involves. The Sunday pleasure-seeker is himself injured by it. Ignoring the claims of his higher nature, and only thinking of the gratification of the passing hour, he forsakes the House of Prayer, and takes his own pleasure on the Holy Day. This is sad enough, and bad enough, but it is not by any means the whole of the evil. All along the line of railway by which he travels, he keeps an army of railway servants at work, compelling them to neglect that Sabbath duty which they owe alike to God and themselves. Nor is even this all. Arrived at his destination, he helps to break the quietude of the rural Sabbath, and keeps those whom he visits from the Sanctuary, that they may minister to his entertainment. It is not himself alone that suffers. Far from it. Many others are involved in the consequences of his sin.

(5.) But, it is sometimes argued, we really need an occasional run into the country, and Sunday is the

only day on which we can get it. We should never see our friends if it were not for the Sunday excursion train, and, cooped up as we are all week, health demands that we take a little relaxation and fresh air in this way. This is the argument of thousands. Let us look it in the face for a moment. It amounts to this—let God's commands be what they may, we cannot suffer our convenience or our comfort to be interfered with by them. Do you think that God only expects His laws to be observed so long as there is no temptation to break them? Why, there is no virtue whatever in keeping them under such circumstances. The time of testing is the time of trial. Any boat can sail over a smooth summer sea. It is when angry blasts are stinging the waters into fury, when the waves have lashed themselves into a passion of foam, and, amid heaving hills of green water, capped with crowns of snow, the vessel is tossed up and down like a toy, that the ship shows what she is. So with us. Anybody can do right when there is no temptation to do wrong. But there is no virtue in that. It is when "all these things are against us," when, though we know what is right, interest and inclination urge us to do what is wrong, when duty and pleasure come into direct and passionate conflict, it is then that the real man comes out. Yield to temptation, and one act shows as truly what we are as would a thousand of the same. But stand like a man, with your face to the foe, and whether it be the Fourth Commandment you are tempted to break, or the Fifth, or the Sixth, or the Seventh, cry like Joseph, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Say, "Away with my pleasure, I will not have it at the expense of my duty," nail your colours to the mast, and then you will indeed prove, as you cannot otherwise, that God and His cause have the uppermost place in your regards.

“ Why comes temptation, but for man to meet  
And master, and make crouch beneath his feet,  
And so be pedestalled in triumph? Pray  
Lead us into no such temptations, Lord!  
Yea, but O Thou whose servants are the bold,  
Lead such temptations by the head and hair,  
Reluctant dragons, up to who dares fight,  
That so he may do battle and have praise.”\*

There can scarcely be a question that on all our great railway lines Sabbath traffic could at once be immediately diminished, not only without loss but to the great gain of all concerned. One of the most interesting meetings held during the Geneva Congress was a conference of managing directors and chief

\* Browning.

The following trenchant little thing lately appeared in a newspaper:—“*Morbus Sabbaticus*, or Sunday sickness is a disease peculiar to Church members. The attack comes on suddenly on Sunday; no symptoms are felt on the Saturday night; the patient sleeps well and awakes feeling well; eats a hearty breakfast, but about church time the attack comes on and continues until services are over for the morning. Then the patient feels easy and eats a hearty dinner.

In the afternoon he feels much better and is able to take a walk, talk politics, and read the Sunday papers; he eats a hearty supper, but about church time he has another attack and stays at home. He retires early, sleeps well, and wakes up on Monday morning refreshed and able to go to work, and does not have any symptoms of the disease until the following Sunday. The peculiar features of this disease are as follows:—

1. It quite often attacks members of the Church.
2. It never makes its appearance except on the Sabbath.
3. The symptoms vary, but it never interferes with the sleep or appetite.
4. It never lasts more than twenty-four hours.
5. It generally attacks the head of the family.
6. No physician is ever called to attend the patient.
7. It always proves fatal in the end—to the soul.
8. No remedy is known for it except earnest prayer.
9. Religion is the only antidote that will cure.
10. It is becoming fearfully prevalent, and is sweeping thousands every year prematurely to destruction.”

engineers of French and Swiss railways. These practical men most strongly expressed their opinion that the Sunday traffic might be greatly diminished without any pecuniary loss to the companies. One of the ablest statisticians in Britain, Mr. Duncan M'Laren, late M.P. for Edinburgh, has expressed his ability to prove from the books of any Sabbath trading railway company, that the Sabbath traffic, instead of adding to the profits, in reality diminishes them. We believe he is right, and that railway companies would find that here, as elsewhere, in the keeping of God's commandments there is great reward.

Here is a resolution which stands on the books of the London and North-Western Railway Company, and which speaks for itself:—"Resolved that the business of the railway shall be suspended on Sundays, except such restricted conveyance of passengers as seems called for on the ground of public necessity, and that the directors, to whom is hereby confided the duty of defining the extent and particulars of such restriction, shall take as their guide in discharging their duty consideration of the public good, and not the private interest of the company." A letter from the secretary of the company says that, "with the view to check Sunday work, the directors have before them every month a return of all Sunday labour, with the grounds which made it necessary." Why cannot all railway companies act in the same spirit and on the same principle? The London and North-Western Railway is one of the largest in the United Kingdom, and it is one of the most prosperous in the world. What is possible for it cannot surely be impossible for others. A rule which it has found good and advantageous, all would, I am sure, find good and advantageous likewise.\*

\* The following letter speaks for itself—



Surely it is the most utter infatuation to imagine that we can expect God's blessing while we defy His authority. Let anyone take the trouble to inquire

“LOUISVILLE, *April 19, 1883.*

“JOHN M'LEOD, Esq., General Superintendent,  
L., N. A., and C. Railway, Louisville, Ky.

“DEAR SIR,—In the future operations of the Louisville, New Albany and Chicago Railway, it is directed that so far as possible no work be done, or trains be run, upon the Sabbath day. You will, on the first of May, stop all trains on the Sabbath, except the evening passenger one. Some questions concerning mail transportation have arisen, and if this train is not required I shall issue a further order concerning it.

“In case of perishable goods or live-stock, it may be necessary to do some work, but you will avoid this where it can safely and properly be done. You will in the future run no excursion trains of any kind, for any purpose, on the Sabbath. This order applies to camp-meeting trains. If Christians cannot find other places for worship, this company will not violate Divine and civil law, and deny its employes the essential rest of the Sabbath to carry them to camp-meeting grounds. I am also informed that a number of the company's employes have conscientious scruples against any work on the Sabbath. There are likely others who do not feel so strongly on this subject. Under no ordinary circumstance must any employe, who objects on the grounds of his religious convictions, be ordered or required to do any service on the Sabbath. If any difficulties arise in the execution of this regulation, you will please report them to me for consideration, and you will also notify the employes of their right, on conscientious grounds, to be fully protected in the observance of a day of rest.—I remain, yours truly,

“BENNETT H. YOUNG, *President.*”

This letter attracted the attention of *The Railway Age* of Chicago, which obtained a fuller expression from President Young for publication. He wrote as follows: “The laws of God and the laws of man are conclusive on this point, forbidding labour on the Sabbath day; and every railway manager operating a road on that day violates human and Divine command, and by forcing his employes to do the same, sets before them a continual example and practice of the disregard of the highest obligations. There is nothing in the business of railways which, in the nature of the case, makes them an exception to these laws, or lifts them above these considerations. They are not a dis-

whether the artisan who resumes his work on Monday morning after an excursion the previous day, or he who has spent his Sabbath quietly with his family in occupations congenial with the spirit of the Sabbath, returns most refreshed and strengthened to the business of the week. In too many cases it is well-known that the Sunday excursion renders the pleasure-seeker unable to return to his work on Monday at all. The effects of the debauchery into which it has led him have not worn off; and even when it has been conducted in sobriety, the hurried preparation for the train on Sabbath morning—the haste to catch it with wife and family—the day spent in lazy lounging, and the evening with another race for the train, and the weary retiring to rest at night, instead of having the effect of recruiting the energies which a week's toil had exhausted, send the man back on Monday morning wan and weary, wearing the appearance of needing rest more than of having enjoyed it. God's way will, let us depend upon it, be always found best by all who will try the experiment. But "whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent will bite him." There is force and wisdom in the old homely lines:

" A Sabbath well spent  
Brings a week of content  
And health for the toils of to-morrow ;  
But a Sabbath profaned,  
Whate'er may be gained,  
Is the certain forerunner of sorrow." \*

tinct or separate class, but incur the same liabilities and duties as other corporations and citizens."

General A. S. Divon, an experienced railroad manager, has recently shown, in letters to the *Christian Union*, that the suspension of all Sunday trains is entirely feasible. His propositions are: "1. The traffic will be substantially the same per week, whether moved in 168 or 144 hours. 2. It can be moved in 144 hours. 3. The extra cost will be fully compensated by improved service." This is but one of many like opinions.

\* Dr. Crafts has received written answers from about 150 per-

What is said of Sabbath railway travelling of course applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to all Sabbath travelling, by steamer, tramcar, omnibus, or other conveyance. Pointing to them all, the angel of the Sabbath may be supposed to say—"He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul : all that hate me love death."

"What says the Prophet? Let that day be blest  
With holiness and consecrated rest.  
Pastime and business both it should exclude,  
And bar the door the moment they intrude,  
Nobly distinguished above all the six,  
By deeds in which the world must never mix.  
Hear him again. He calls it 'a delight,'  
A day of luxury, observed aright,  
When the glad soul is made heaven's welcome guest,  
Sits banqueting, and God prepares the feast."\*

sons, many of them manufacturers, to the following question : In your observation of clerks, mechanics, and other employés, which class are in the best physical and mental condition for the renewal of business on Monday mornings, those who are church-goers, or those who spend the Sabbaths in picnics and other pleasures? The general answer is, "Church-goers." A New York man, who has been an employer of about 200 men for many years, says : "The church-goers are worth twenty-five per cent. more on an average." Hon. Darwin R. James, M.C., of Brooklyn, who has had abundant opportunities for observation in this matter as a business man, and as a Congressman, says : "The Sabbath observers and church-goers are in far better condition to enter upon work on Monday morning than those who spend Sunday in pleasures, even of a comparatively innocent kind."

"The church-goers," says Dr. J. E. Rankin, "are as fresh as larks, while the pleasure-goers have aches in the head, heart and home, and so come into the week all out of breath." Says another : "Church-goers can be recognised in a crowd—clean, healthy, prosperous." Mr. Clem. Studebaker, the famous wagon manufacturer, says : "My observation is that clerks and mechanics who spend their Sabbaths in church and Sabbath-school work are the best fitted for the duties of the office or shop on the Monday morning."

\* "Where do you spend your Sundays, my friend?" was

asked of a tram-car conductor one Saturday evening, by a lady who was travelling towards her home in the suburbs.

"Sundays!" said the man bitterly, "we never get none, not we! It's always week-days with us—work, work, work, from morning till night, seven days a week; and if you don't like it—well, you can leave, there's lots of men ready to take your place."

"It's not right," said the lady, pityingly, "it's not right, and I wonder the proprietors of the cars allow them to run on Sundays. If people wish to take their pleasure that day, they ought to be obliged to walk."

"Oh, bless you, it ain't the pleasure-seekers only who fill the cars. It's the religious people in my opinion that do *most* to keep the cars going on Sundays."

"But surely Christians cannot be so thoughtless and so unrighteous as to travel about to such an extent."

"No, I don't say 'Christians;' I said, 'religious people.' Christians, I've been told, are those who are like Christ, who are loving and fair in their doings, and who do all they can to help others and not to hinder them. I've thought a deal about it, and maybe should have been a Christian myself, but I've no time to think of such things now; morning, noon, and night, it's up and down on your tram, taking your twopences and threepences, going on so late at night, till you're just so tired you throw yourself down on your bed like a dog. It's just the religious people who do it, I say, and there's lots of tram conductors who could tell you the same. Why we have regular passengers of a Sunday—folks going off to hear their favourite preacher; and they'll ride to hear him, because the roads is so muddy, or because the weather is so hot, or something of the sort. They're horrified if they see the shops open, and they shake their heads and say, 'What wicked people to keep their shops open on Sundays, and to buy and sell on the day of rest.' Yes, I've heard 'em. And yet they thinks nothing of buying a tram-ticket, and of taking out their purses to pay for it, with their Bibles and prayer-books in the other hand. Oh, I'm sick of seeing 'em; they're a set of hypocrites!"

"Oh, don't say that," said the lady gently. "I am sure many do it just from want of thought."

"Then they *should* think," returned the conductor earnestly; "they come and fill our trams, and make it worth the proprietors' while to run 'em; they take away our Sundays, and then they go to our churches and chapels, and sing—

" 'Oh, day of rest and gladness.  
Oh, day most calm and bright!'

and all the while they are making it as hard a day as they can for us, and taking away the rest that God intended we should have. Why should we be shut out from having what God meant for us? Why should man take from us what God gave us? It isn't only us conductors who feel it; there's the drivers, and the ostlers, and stablemen, and checkers—they've all to be working on the day of rest to take folks to their places of worship."

## CHAPTER XV.

### SABBATH POSTAL WORK.

**T**HERE is very little accurate idea in the public mind of the amount of Sabbath work which is carried on in connection with the post-office. The number of officials of various kinds—superintendents, sorters, letter-carriers, and railway and mail-car employés—involved in it is startlingly large. In England, where the claims of the Lord's Day are better recognised than in other countries, there are yet some 23,500 persons *directly* employed in post-office work, some of them doing the same amount of duty as on other days. One of the good services rendered by the great Sabbath Congress in Geneva, in September 1876, was that it called prominent attention to this Sunday post-office labour, and showed that a vast amount of it, in almost every country of Europe, was unnecessary and unjustifiable. Take, for instance, the delivery of letters from house to house on the Sabbath. London, the largest and wealthiest and busiest city in the world, manages to do without this. So do many other large cities and towns. If they can dispense with it, it surely cannot be a necessity anywhere, and if not a necessity, who can defend it? Even leaving the labour of the employés in this matter out of account, what a boon it is to the homes of the people to be free on the one day from the influx of the world which comes at the sound of the postman's rap! One of the most prominent merchants in London says, that he believes firmly he would have been in a lunatic asylum long ago if it had not been for the fact that every seventh

day he gets no letters. It would be the interest of every merchant and business man of every sort to have the same immunity.\* When people consider what an amount of fagging toil is imposed upon thousands of men on the Lord's Day that people may have a gossiping letter, or a newspaper, or a business communication which they would be better without, and which could quite well keep till Monday morning, surely the enormity of the evil is apparent. Now, it is well to call attention to the fact that people have this matter entirely in their own hands. The Postmaster-General stated recently in the House of Commons that there was only a Sunday delivery of letters in towns which expressed a desire to have it. It is taken for granted that the towns and villages and country districts where letters are delivered on the Sabbath wish them so delivered. It has often seemed to the writer marvellous to find the inhabitants of small country places, who profess a regard for religion and the Sabbath, going on quietly countenancing this evil, and refusing to say they will have no further complicity in it, when at once, so far as their district was concerned, it might cease. There is some serious sin being thus committed in many towns and villages that could be named—sin for which the ministers of the Gospel in these places are not irresponsible, if they have not made an effort to place the matter clearly before the inhabitants. Let it be well understood that the people of any town can address the post-office by memorial, and they cannot have letters forced on them against their will on the Sabbath. This being so, the duty of all lovers of the Sacred Day is plain, and they should lose no time in taking action. Should the question be asked,

\* Postmaster General Jewell ordered a Sunday morning delivery by carriers in New York. The storm of indignant protest from Christian business men prevented its continuing a second Sabbath.

What shall we do to rid ourselves of all responsibility for this form of Sabbath-breaking? we answer—

1. Address a letter to the Postmaster of your town, requesting him to retain until Monday all letters and newspapers for you, which in the ordinary course would have been delivered on the Lord's Day, and thus protest against a system so extensively injurious, and which is in direct violation of the law of God. With this request, if made in writing, the Postmaster is bound to comply. This plan has been adopted to a great extent throughout the country, not only, as we learn, without inconvenience, but much to the spiritual enjoyment of the persons adopting it. In Bath, Derby, Liverpool, Manchester, Shrewsbury, Hertford, Taunton, Ipswich, Swansea, York, and more than 400 other places, many thousands of persons have refused to receive their letters on the Lord's Day.

2. By the regulations issued 23rd April 1872, a Sunday Rural Post will be abolished if the receivers of two-thirds of the letters for the district petition for its discontinuance. No Sunday Rural Post will be put on, unless the receivers of two-thirds of the letters for the district desire its establishment, or (as the case may be) its restoration.

3. When a petition is sent in, the number of letters for those who *have* and for those who have *not* signed it are counted on certain days. If the petitioners on those days receive two-thirds of all the letters, the delivery will be abolished; hence it is desirable that every member of a household who ever receives a letter should sign the petition.

4. Sunday postal deliveries in towns may be much reduced by persons signing a request for their Sunday letters to be kept in the post-office till Monday.

5. The post-office employés are not allowed to make any efforts to obtain freedom from Sunday toil, therefore the friends of the Sabbath should take up their cause the more earnestly.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### *SOME NINETEENTH CENTURY SABBATH-KEEPERS.*

THE Sabbath rests on a Divine foundation. We call upon men to observe it, not on human authority, but on the supreme authority of God. But it may perhaps hearten and encourage us in its observance if we have some human testimonies to its value, and some illustrations of the spirit and manner in which good men and women have stood by it.

We begin with the highest personage in these realms.

Shortly after she came to the throne, one of her Cabinet Ministers called upon her Majesty at Buckingham Palace one Sabbath afternoon with some State matters for her consideration. "Are they matters of *necessity*, or can they wait until Monday morning?" inquired the Queen. "Please your Majesty, Monday morning will certainly do quite well." "Then by all means let them wait," said the Queen, and her visitor left her, having, we hope, learned a life-long lesson. Would that all Her Majesty's subjects would learn it also! It may not be generally known that the Queen has given strict orders that no household supplies of any kind shall be brought into her palaces on the Day of Rest.

On one occasion during a musical performance at Windsor Castle, the Queen noticed that one of the musicians belonging to her private band was not present. Her Majesty inquired of the master of the band the cause of his absence. "Please your Majesty, he has left the band." "Why?" asked the Queen.

"Please your Majesty, I had to dismiss him." "And why?" "Because he would not attend the rehearsal of the piece we have just played to your Majesty, which I thought needful to have last Sunday."

"Let him be instantly reinstated. I forbid all Sunday rehearsals by my band in future," was the reply of our sovereign. The words speak for themselves.

A similar anecdote is told of King George III. When he was repairing his palace at Kew, one of the workmen, who was a pious man, was particularly noticed by his Majesty, and he often held conversations with him of some length upon serious subjects.

One Monday morning, the king went as usual to watch the progress of the work, and not seeing this man in his customary place, inquired the reason of his absence. He was answered evasively, and for some time the other workmen avoided telling him the truth. At last, however, upon being more strictly interrogated, they acknowledged that, not having been able to complete a particular job on the Saturday night, they had returned to finish it on the following morning. This man alone had refused to comply, because he considered it a violation of the Christian Sabbath; and, in consequence of what they called his obstinacy, he had been dismissed entirely from his employment.

"Call him back immediately," exclaimed the good king. "The man who refused doing his ordinary work on the Lord's Day is *the man for me*. Let him be sent for."

The man was accordingly replaced, and the king ever after showed him particular favour.

Speaking of working on the Sabbath reminds us of the following suggestive incident—

The late Edward Corderoy, Esq., a merchant in London, addressing a meeting of several thousands of

the men of London in Exeter Hall, on the question of Sunday Rest, said :—

“I knew a man once who honoured the Sabbath day. He was the manager of large works for a Government contractor, and had to pay some hundreds of men on a Saturday night. I think it was at a time when, by a change in the coinage, some temporary works were required in haste; his employer told him he must work on the Sunday, and have his men in the yard. ‘Sir,’ replied he, ‘I will work for you till twelve o’clock on the Saturday night, but I dare not work on the Sabbath. I have a higher Master to serve.’ ‘George,’ said the master, ‘my back is not so broad as yours, but *I* will bear the blame.’ His foreman told him, ‘There is a day coming when each must give an account for himself,’ and firmly, but respectfully, he declined to work on the Sabbath.

“Yet that man was but a servant; he had a wife and six children: had he lost his situation, he had nothing but his character and his skill as a workman to sustain him. You would say: ‘Oh, yes, he had far more; he had the blessing of the God of the Sabbath.’

“The Sabbath morning came—who that witnessed the sight ever could forget it? The men assembled and went to work under other orders than those they were accustomed to receive. This good man assembled his family—the Scriptures were read—prayer was offered—the frugal meal was despatched—and then, father and mother, and the six children, left the yard (for they all lived on the premises) in the sight of the assembled workmen, and walked solemnly away to the House of God.

“I thank God that that working man was *my* father!

“The situation was not lost; the God-fearing working man was all the more honoured and trusted because of his religious consistency. He closed the eyes

of his employer when the friends of more prosperous times had nearly all forsaken him. The family my father served consisted of four brothers, the eldest of whom was buried with honour in Westminster Abbey—my father attended the funeral of the youngest in an ordinary graveyard, and none were found to erect a tombstone!

“My friends, whatever of prosperity has been vouchsafed to my brothers and myself, I unhesitatingly attribute, under God, to that honoured father’s instruction and example, who would not break the commandment to ‘*Keep holy the SABBATH DAY.*’”

Sir Charles Middleton, afterwards known as Lord Barham, who, as First Lord of the Admiralty, had the management of the English navy, managed it in times of difficulty so great that never before or since was there such a demand for prompt and efficient service. Urgent and rapid were the demands which Lord Nelson made upon the navy department, and his circumstances and uncommon movements required no ordinary energy to supply what he called for. Yet Lord Barham permitted no Sunday labour in the dockyards. Notwithstanding, so well was everything done, and so promptly, that Lord Nelson commended him in the highest terms. Where there’s the will, there’s the way.

General Dobbs, who had charge of the Chittledrong Division, in the Mysore, shortly after that country came under the administration of the British Government, gives his experience to the same effect as follows:—

“Having been, as respected details of management, left very much to the exercise of my own judgment, I enforced from the first the principle of Sunday rest in every department, especially with regard to physical labour, strictly adhering to the principle both as respected myself personally and all private workmen

and servants. To secure cordial acquiescence and successful results, I paid seven days' hire to weekly labourers, a liberality which at first met with strenuous opposition from my native subordinates, such payments being in their opinion a waste of public money; but I was able in a short time to satisfy myself, if not the Hindoo agents under me, that in a financial point of view the experiment was a success. Amongst other labourers I had a gang of convicts, numbering in all from four to five hundred individuals, employed in constructing roads, who had in common with hired labourers entire rest on Sunday. I was enabled to show by minute and detailed accounts that the quantity of work executed by them was considerably above the average work done by free labourers who worked the whole seven days.

"Rest on Sunday became the regular rule throughout the district; yet the quantity of work performed attracted general attention. In 1850 I built a new house of large dimensions; the whole building was substantially constructed, and of the best materials. All my labourers and workmen were paid seven days hire for six days work. The result was marvellous. The first spade and pickaxe were stuck into the ground on the 12th of September. On the third of June following I and my family occupied the building. I voluntarily undertook the execution of the public works of my division from 1835 to 1856 (when an engineer and staff were appointed), during which period I constructed six hundred miles of road, including upwards of thirteen hundred bridges, thirty-five public buildings, three private houses, besides repairing thousands of irrigation works, in carrying out which I followed out the principle of Sunday rest. I have therefore solid grounds for giving a practical opinion, which is, that, altogether exclusive of the religious aspect of the question, man is physically and mentally

the better for a periodical day of rest, and is actually and positively able to perform more work in six than in seven consecutive days. My object now is not to advocate the spiritual blessings connected with the Lord's Day rest, which, alas, few fully appreciate, but to lead reflecting men to recognise that nature, equally with revelation, calls for a periodical day of rest."

In the "Life of Commodore Perry" we meet with the following suggestive incident. The fleet of which he had the command lay in Japanese waters, sent to open Japan to western civilisation. The Sabbath came and "the Americans would transact no business on this day! Why? It was the Sabbath for rest and worship, honoured by the admiral from childhood, in public as well as private life. With the aid of glasses from the bluffs on the shore, the Japanese saw the 'Mississippi's' capstan wreathed with a flag, a big book laid thereon, and smaller books handed around. One, in a gown, lowered his head, all listening did likewise. Then all sang, the band lending its instrumental aid to swell the volume of sound. The strains floated shoreward and were heard; the music was 'Old Hundred,' the hymn was—

'Before Jehovah's awful throne,  
Ye nations bow with sacred joy.'

The open book on the capstan was the Bible. In the afternoon a visiting party of dignitaries was denied admittance to the decks of the vessel; nor was this a mere freak of Perry's, but according to his rule and principle. The commodore was but carrying out a habit formed at his mother's knee, and never slighted at home or abroad. It was a strange summons to the Japanese. Its echoes are now heard in a thousand glens and in many cities of the Mikado's empire. The waters of Yeddo Bay have since become a baptismal flood. Where cannon were cast, to resist Perry, now

stands the Imperial Female Normal College. On the treaty grounds rises the spire of a Christian church. Would that all admirals and commanding officers of ships acted in the same spirit!"

Another incident—A native merchant in Foo Chow, who has in his employment one thousand Chinamen, was recently converted. A total cessation from Sunday trade being insisted upon by the missionaries as a test of church fellowship, Mr. Ahok gladly complied. Although his non-Christian partners in business naturally objected, he went so far as to offer on his own account full seven days wages to all who would abstain from Sabbath toil, and who would give attention to the religion that he had learned to prize so much. Such devotion as this has impressed the idolatrous mind in favour of religion, and has led to numerous conversions. We must show to the unbelieving world the reality of our faith by a more strict regard for the divine commands.

The good Lord Shaftesbury once told the following anecdote:—"Let me narrate an interesting fact, told to me by an intimate friend of mine, a clergyman living in one of the great parishes in the suburbs of London:—He had in his parish a gentleman who was the proprietor of a great number of omnibuses, which invariably ran on the Sunday. The proprietor *never* attended a place of worship, neither he nor his family; but, by the exercise of his influence, my friend the clergyman persuaded him to attend a place of worship, and to try the experiment of stopping the running of his omnibuses, and the constant employment of his men on the Lord's Day. He determined to *try*! At the end of a year he came to my friend and said: 'The experiment has answered so well that I will continue it to the end of my days. So far from suffering financially, I am a better man by many pounds this year than last year. In the first place, my horses,

by having one day's complete rest, are better able to do their work during the week, and are not so subject to accidents; but the principal point is, that I *receive more money than I used to do*, and I trace it to this—it is not, I believe, that the receipts are actually larger, but it is that the men, having a better moral example set them, and having a day of repose, which they devote to honest, sober, and religious purposes, and being by that greatly improved in moral condition, do that which they have never done before—*faithfully bring to me every farthing which they earn.*”

Every one who tries the experiment finds that “in the keeping of God's commandments there is great reward,” even here.

Some years ago, in one of the streets in Spitalfields, notorious for its open shops on the Lord's Day, a young man with whom the Rev. W. Tyler was acquainted opened a cheesemonger's shop. Mr. Tyler called upon him on his first day of opening, to wish him success; and after a short conversation, said,—

“Now, my friend, what about Sunday? I hope you do not intend to open the shop on the Lord's Day.”

The reply was, “You see, sir, all the people about here open on the Sunday, I fear I shall be *obliged* to do the same.”

“That is no reason why *you* should do so,” rejoined the minister. “Don't let them be guides for you. Give me pen and ink, and a large piece of paper, and I will show you what to do.”

Upon this request being complied with, Mr. Tyler immediately wrote, in clear bold letters, the following notice:—

“THIS SHOP WILL NOT BE OPENED ON SUNDAYS.”

“Now,” said Mr. Tyler, “take my advice, put that up in a conspicuous place. Hoist your colours at the outset; God will not let you suffer for doing your duty.”



At this moment the wife came in and seconded the appeal; upon which the shopkeeper took a hammer and nail, and stuck the announcement on a butter-cask behind the counter, near the window, so that it could be read by the customers who entered the shop.

About seven years after, Mr. Tyler was passing by this tradesman's shop, when he observed that its proprietor's name was being placed upon the shop-front in gold letters.

The shopkeeper presently appeared, and said, "Mr. Tyler, I have to thank *you* for that. I am the first member of my family whose name has ever appeared *in gold letters*! Nearly all the tradesmen who were in business in this street when I commenced, and who opened their shops on Sundays, have *failed*, whilst I have prospered."

Time passed on, but it only brought with it greater prosperity. When Mr. Tyler last heard of the tradesman in whose welfare he had taken such an interest, he found that God had so far blessed his industry and his conscientiousness, that he had been enabled to retire upon a comfortable competency to a country residence. "Them that honour Me I will honour."

We might go on thus to almost any length, for the testimonies which might be adduced to the value of the Sabbath and to the gain resulting from its conscientious observance are almost innumerable. We say emphatically, the gain made by Sabbath work is in all cases an unreal gain and a real loss. We may say of individuals what Lord Macaulay has said of the nation:—"Suppose the Sabbath had been abolished three hundred years ago, and that from that time till now the people of this country had worked upon that day—and there are 15,000 or 16,000 Sabbaths included in that period—that on every one of these days the hammer, and the spade, and the power-loom had been going, this would be an addition to our labours

of fifty years. But what would fifty years of additional industry, in the course of three hundred years, do for us? Compare England fifty years ago with England now, and do you believe that if these fifty years of industry had been thrown into the mass of three hundred years' labour, the bulk of the people of this country would have been richer than now? I believe they would have been poorer. I do not say that a man would not do more in seven days than in six; but I doubt whether any man would do more in the course of years, working seven instead of six. A man working so for ten years, I venture to say, will not do so much. Then if you apply this to a great society, going on generation after generation, is it not a most monstrous error to suppose that your three centuries of wealth would have been increased by this expedient?"

Very interesting inquiries have lately been made as to what is the most perfect Sabbath-keeping city in the world. Scotland, where, Christopher North said, "The Sabbath is itself," used to be counted the model land in this respect, and Edinburgh the model city. But it seems from late investigations as if Scotland must yield the palm to Canada and Edinburgh to Toronto, which is now said to surpass all other cities in the world in its Sabbath-keeping. Mr. Joseph Cook calls it "a great object-lesson" on the Sabbath. When lately there, the Mayor came to him at his hotel and said—"You have passed a Sunday here. A network of horse-car tramways lay before your hotel. Have you seen the horse-cars moving?" "No." "Did you notice any saloons open?" "No." "Were there any cigar stands visible on the streets or through the windows?" "No." "Have you ever seen a more quiet Sunday than Toronto gave you yesterday?" "No." "But you have been in Edinburgh?" "Yes." The Secretary of the Sabbath Alliance of Scotland

admits that Toronto is the most perfect specimen of a Sabbath-keeping city that he has ever seen.

There is little or no Sunday labour of vessels, or Sunday work of blast furnaces. The streets are quiet, save when crowded with church-goers. Druggists are not allowed to do a miscellaneous business in cigars and drinks—after the fashion of some American cities—but are open only for the sale of medicines, for an hour or two in the morning, and again toward evening. All the telegraphists rest on the Sabbath, except one man at the central office for emergencies. Livery stables are allowed to open only for emergencies. The cab stands are vacant and the tram-cars do not run. Even the ferrymen can rest most of the Sabbath, the ferries being allowed to cross to the island opposite the city—a popular summer residence—only at certain hours for the convenience of church-goers. No passenger trains are started, there are no Sunday papers, and the churches are full. All drink-shops are required to close at seven o'clock on Saturday evening and not to open till six on Monday morning. We do not wonder that a Toronto publisher says, "Our people like their Sabbath, and were it put to vote to have a change, I think there would be a very small minority for it." We thoroughly agree with Dr. Crafts in saying that "Great Britain and America ought to go, not to Paris, but to Toronto for a free Sunday; that is, a Sunday in which one-half of mankind shall be free from servile work for the amusement of the other half."\*

\* *The Sabbath for Man*, p. 393.

## CHAPTER XVII

### *HOW THE CONFLICT GOES ON.*

THE battle of the Sabbath continues to be fought out in every country of Christendom. The spectator has but to place himself at some point of vantage to be able to note the muster of the opposing forces, to hear the sounds of the conflict, to see the ground that is being lost or won. Let us do so for a few moments.

In England the desire to introduce the Continental Sunday is still the heart's wish of too many. In certain of the upper circles, what can only be called a very high-handed and scandalous desecration of the day has become the fashion. Last spring the Bishop of Exeter drew the attention of the Upper House of Convocation to this fact, and the petition on the subject which he laid on the table of the House is one of the most saddening documents we have ever read. It gives a list of the favourite and congenial Sabbath occupations of many fashionable people, including "dinner parties, smoking concerts, theatrical and semi-theatrical performances, comic recitations and amusing programmes of fun and frolic, exhibitions of jugglery, Sunday parades in Hyde Park, coach drives of clubs and drags assembling at Hampton Court, Richmond, and other places of resort, the Sunday up the river, boxing at the Pelican Club, lawn tennis, dances at clubs and private houses, exhibitions of the Wild West Show, Sundays in the studios of artists." The catalogue is fearful. In addition, the petitioners say they

could name people who are ostentatiously eager to set at defiance the prejudices of their neighbours, who prefer to do on Sunday what might as well be done on Monday, and who fix parties and *fetes* on the former day just because it is novel to do so, so demoralised are certain circles becoming on the subject. The revelation contained in this petition aroused a very painful sensation all over the country, as well it might. Few had any idea that things had reached such a fearful pass. When attention was once called to the matter, however, confirmations of the truth of the bishop's assertions flowed in from many quarters.

The *Times* sounded a loud note of warning in the ears of the public. It said—"It is pretty certain that we shall not take the course which best suits us as a nation, with our history and habits, by slavishly copying Sunday as it is spent in Vienna, Paris, or Berlin. It has its seamy side. If we look closely at the gala-making, spontaneous though it seems, it is found to be ministered to by a multitude of labourers. The vast multitude of human beings who live as their fathers did, who prize equally liberty, leisure, and repose, who do not wish to tread down all distinctions between days, but treasure them as sacred safeguards, will be confirmed in their convictions by this remonstrance."\* These are wise words. It is only, however, when we add to such considerations the Divine sanctions of the Holy Day,—only when we reflect how all religion would long ago have died out of the earth but for its weekly return and its religious observance,—only when we reflect upon the probability of such unhallowed practices spreading downward from upper classes to lower, and from London and England all over the United Kingdom, that we see the peril and the evil of this Sabbath desecration in high places in all their terribleness. No lover either of his country

\* *The Times*, March 3rd, 1888.

or his God but must tremble to read of it, and must pray that the attention called to it, and the efforts to cope with it, may issue in reform. The evil is of course much more than one of mere Sabbath desecration. Such practices as we mention indicate a fearfully low state of all religion in the circles referred to. What is to be done to elevate this? Will it be of much avail to cover the sore with a film of outward decency, while it continues to rot and fester underneath uncured?

A brighter aspect of the Sabbath conflict is brought to view in the action of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, which was appointed in 1887 to consider the question of Sunday postal labour. They made a report containing a number of valuable suggestions which deserve to be put on record. They recommended—"First, that the collection and despatch and the delivery on Sunday of books, circulars, and printed matter other than newspapers be discontinued. Second, that the collection and despatch and the delivery of newspapers and letters on Sunday be in future discontinued—(a) in any town having a municipal corporation, local board, or urban sanitary authority, upon the receipt by the Postmaster-General of a resolution praying for discontinuance, which shall have been passed by two-thirds, constituting a majority, of the whole number of the town council, or local board, or urban sanitary authority, at a meeting specially called, with proper notice, for the purpose; (b.) in any village and in any parish or postal sub-district, situate in any town which has not a municipal corporation, or local board, or urban sanitary authority, upon the receipt, by the Postmaster-General, of a resolution praying for discontinuance, which shall have been passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the ratepayers, voting in the same manner as is provided in the Free Libraries Act, provided always that in every case of discontinuance of

house-to-house delivery a window delivery should be substituted. When the window delivery is substituted for house-to-house delivery on Sundays, the hours for such window delivery shall be so fixed as to secure the smallest practicable amount of Sunday labour compatible with public convenience, and in each case a resolution applying for the establishment or re-establishment of the collection and despatch and the delivery of letters and newspapers on Sunday must be passed by the same body, and by a like majority, before the application is entertained by the authorities. It appears from the evidence laid before the Committee by the Secretary to the Post-office, that some sorting clerks are on duty every Sunday, while many are on duty seven Sundays out of eight, and three Sundays out of four; and that of 3,304 rural messengers who work on Sundays, while 2,242 have an alternate Sunday off duty, 1,062 work every Sunday. The Committee therefore recommend—(a) That the indoor duties of the Post-office service be so arranged as to relieve all sorting clerks and indoor officials so far as possible on alternate Sundays. (b) That the rural messengers should, by the appointment of substitutes at the expense of the Department, be wholly relieved from work on every alternate Sunday.” Unfortunately, all these recommendations were not adopted. But an experimental discontinuance of the despatch and delivery of book packets and circulars on Sunday was inaugurated at Bristol, Nottingham, and Wolverhampton, and the subordinate rural districts, this arrangement to continue until further notice.

Scotland, which used to be famous for the completeness of its Sabbath-keeping, and which is still far ahead of many other lands in this respect, has not escaped the prevalent infection. Godly people see with sorrow the creeping in there of a Sabbath laxity to which the country used to be a stranger. The ex-

cursion trains and the pleasure steamers are in too many places largely patronised. Worse still, ministers of the gospel have been found recommending their parishioners from the pulpit to engage in harvesting operations on the Holy Day. But the heart of the country is still, we believe, sound on the Sabbath question. So long as the three great Churches of Scotland retain any true allegiance to the Westminster Confession of Faith they must be sound on it, and so long as the people continue to be imbued with the spirit of their old Shorter Catechism they cannot fail to remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy, in spite of the unfaithful advice of blind guides or the bitterness of irresponsible newspaper scribes.

In Ireland we have been anxiously waiting for promised and much-needed legislation on the Sunday Closing question. The Act of 1878 was only passed for a period of four years. Since the expiry of the first period it has been annually renewed, but many imperfections have been found in its working. The five largest towns of the country are exempted from complete Sunday Closing, and the *bona fide* traveller clause has been found a too convenient loophole of escape for thirsty souls. In addition, a very strong feeling has grown up in favour of an earlier closing of public-houses on Saturday night. A permanent Sunday Closing Bill and a Bill for Earlier Closing on Saturdays were accordingly introduced into the House of Commons last session. They were referred to a Select Committee which reported strongly in favour of both. The Committee recommended—

“(1) That the Act of 1878 should be made perpetual, and extended to the five exempted cities.

(2) That the qualifying distance under the *bona fide* traveller provision should be extended to six miles.

(3) That all houses for the sale of intoxicating liquors in Ireland should be closed at 9 p.m. on Saturdays.”



Unfortunately, the pressure of business did not allow either bill to be passed. The Sunday Closing Act was again included in the "Expiring Laws Continuance Act" and we are left to wait a little longer for the inclusion of the five exempted towns and for a Saturday Early Closing Act. All that is best in the sentiment of the country is strongly in favour of both measures.

The General Assembly of the Irish Presbyterian Church continues to watch over the interests of the Sabbath with great diligence. This year its efforts to promote a healthy public feeling on the subject have received a valuable stimulus through the munificence of that well-known friend of the Sabbath, J. T. Morton, Esq., of London, who has placed the sum of £125 at the disposal of its Sabbath Observance Committee for the purpose of encouraging the study of the Sabbath question by the young, and has also offered three prizes of £50, £30, and £20 respectively, for the best essays on the Sabbath written by Irish Presbyterian ministers.

While in too many cases in the United Kingdom there seems to be an anxious wish on the part of some to get rid of the Sabbath, it is at once touching and instructive to see how on the Continent the most earnest efforts are made to regain it. In 1886 the Italian Legislature enacted a law requiring that children employed in factories should be allowed to rest one day in each week. In 1885 Austria, in response to the bitter cry of Sabbathless toilers, passed a stringent law emancipating even printers from Sabbath work. True, Greed recaptured his slaves, but the national confession was made all the same that a week without a Sabbath was felt to be an intolerable burden. In 1886 a thousand Berlin carpenters sent the following instructive and suggestive petition to the German Chancellor:—"Prince Bismarck: You have declared that you will not legally forbid Sunday work until

convinced by the voice of the labourers that they demand rest on that day. Here, then, is their voice. We declare explicitly that we desire a law which will grant us protection in the enjoyment of freedom from work on Sunday. Sunday labour leads to misery, crime, and vagabondism." A commission has been appointed by the German Government to inquire into the question of Sunday work, and meanwhile several reforms of a local kind have been introduced. In Stuttgart 600 shopkeepers have voluntarily agreed to close their shops on the Day of Rest. In Alsace-Lorraine all public-houses are now legally closed on the Sabbath till noon.

In Belgium and Holland earnest efforts are being made in the same direction. At a Socialist Congress held in Ghent in 1886 one of the chief demands was for the weekly rest of the Sunday. In Holland no work is now to be allowed on Sunday that is open to public view; no sales of any sort are to be made in public, with the exception of eatables; no places of public amusement are to be open before eight o'clock in the evening, nor are intoxicating drinks to be sold near churches in case worship is being conducted in them, nor anywhere before noon.

Even in Russia a beginning has been made in the direction of recognising the need of some legislation for a weekly rest-day. Surely it is a curious commentary on the persistent efforts of certain people in England to introduce the Continental Sunday into these lands that the Continental nations, which have had experience of its operation for centuries, are step by step trying to emancipate themselves from its bondage. What fools we shall be and slow of heart to discern the signs of the times, if when we see our neighbours groaning over their lost Rest-Day, and making desperate efforts to recover it, we quietly sit still while it is being filched away from us.

A similar tendency to that which we have seen prevailing on the Continent has been manifesting itself of late in those parts of America where the holiday Sunday prevails. Deprived of State protection of the Day of Rest, the people are combining to protect it themselves. "In La Crosse, not long since, the Norwegians formed a 'Law and Order League' to enforce the Sabbath laws. Saloons had been suffered to keep open on part of the Sunday. Some of the dealers in better goods, unwilling to lose their share of the Saturday night's wages, claimed the same sufferance. Their competitors in the same line of goods felt it necessary to do the same in self-defence, until nearly all the retail merchants and their clerks had lost their Sabbath rest, and gained nothing in return. They were simply doing seven days' work for six days' profits. The movement of the Law and Order League was an attempt to recapture the lost rest. The liquor dealers, being closed out, retaliated by enforcing the law against the horse-cars, and seem to have accomplished their purpose, as in many other places, stopping enforcement by enforcement. At Cincinnati, in 1886, a mass meeting of 1500 Germans, largely working-men, adopted strong resolutions in favour of the protection of the day for rest and worship. In Chicago, since the opening of this year, a movement has been made to secure from the State Legislature a stricter law against opening shops and stores on the Sabbath, in which the Knights of Labour and Labour Unions have taken leading parts. Assemblies and associations of clerks, barbers, butchers and other trades, have joined with the Sabbath Association in mass meetings and other forms of agitation for this rescue of Sabbath rest. In Newport, Va., the organ of the coloured people has this year protested against the Sunday labour of that port. In Washington, the Barber Assembly of the Knights of Labour has inau-

gured a crusade for the Sunday closing of barber-shops. In Baltimore the Carriage drivers' Association has recently joined with the Undertakers' Association to prevent Sunday funerals except in cases of necessity. In Reading, Pennsylvania, the barbers have themselves attempted to enforce Sunday closing of barber-shops. An extensive reduction of Sunday trains on the Pennsylvania Railroad has been brought about by labour agitation. In Newark and Orange, N. J., Law and Order Leagues have recently enforced the Sabbath laws in the interests of working-men, and with their co-operation. In New York, in recent months, working-men have made unprecedented efforts to secure emancipation from the Sunday work which they have partly brought on themselves by secularizing the day with labour union conventions and picnics. Hatters, shoe salesmen, bakers, grocers clerks, dry goods clerks, book-keepers, barbers, have all recently made their protest against the needless Sunday work required of them, and have secured several spasms of law enforcement. In New York, as elsewhere, working-men are finding that where they require or allow their fellows to work on the Sabbath for their amusement, their own turn to work comes ere long. Casting out religion from the Sabbath, they cast out rest." \*

Surely all this is most instructive. The testimony which it bears to the necessity for a Sabbath, even on humanitarian grounds, tells its own tale. Christians tunnelling from one side of the mountain for the glory of God, and working-men tunnelling from the other for their own good, meet at the Fourth Commandment. But this pathetic story of effort to regain the lost Sabbath reads us another lesson. It reminds us emphatically that prevention is better and easier than cure. These Sabbathless white slaves of the Continent and of America, who are crying out so piteously

\* Rev. W. F. Crafts, D.D., in *Christian Statesman*.

for their Rest Day, and who are forced to be contented so often with even less than the half loaf when they ask for bread, warn us that it is easier to lose than to regain our Sabbaths. Classical story tells us of a king who, anxious to beautify his capital, ordered the demolition of the old city gates, which were out of keeping with his ideas of architectural beauty, and the erection in their place of new and, as he thought, more tasteful structures. The workmen accordingly began their task, but they had not proceeded far with the destruction of the old fabric when their tools one day suddenly exposed to view a stone bearing this inscription—“*Claustra hæc cum patria sua stantque caduntque*”—(“These gates stand or fall with their country”). The discovery was reported to the king. Alarmed and astounded, he immediately ordered the cessation of the work on which he had entered and the restoration of the partly demolished gates, and would never afterwards allow them to be interfered with. So, men impatient of the old-fashioned gates of the Sabbath, which for thousands of years have swung solemnly round upon their hinges once every week, to shut out the din of the world from men’s minds and shut men themselves in with God, may declare that, however well these Sabbath gates may have suited primitive times, this great age of ours demands some structure of a lighter and more elegant type, and may cry out impatiently—“Raze, raze the old Sabbath to the foundation!” It will be well to pause before giving heed to such clamour. What if we discover, as in the case of the ancient gates, that the true welfare and safety of the land are so connected with the Sabbath of the Lord, that these only stand when it stands, and are sure to fall with its fall?

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER.*

WE have now finished our argument and its illustration. What we proposed to ourselves at the outset to do\* was to ascertain on what authoritative basis the observance of the Sabbath rests, and what is the exact nature of the Sabbath-keeping which that authority requires. Keeping these objects in view, we have traced the history of the Sacred Day from Creation down. We have followed its fortunes into lands ancient and modern, and concentrated upon it all the light, not only of the Scripture lamp, but of all others that we could discover. We have seen that it is no mere Jewish institution, but given to and intended for man, universal man, that it is as much commanded in the Decalogue as honesty or purity, that our Blessed Lord carefully observed it, cleared away from it the incrustations of Rabbinical tradition which had gathered round it in His day, and passed it on to the Church and the world more beautiful than ever. We have found that the Apostles observed it, as their Master did, changing the day but leaving the institution untouched, and we have seen too that ever since, like some bright and richly laden argosy, the holy Sabbath has floated down the stream of time, bearing to us, as it did to those who went before, blessings innumerable. We have seen how it has been prized and loved not only by holy men and women in all ages, but its observance inculcated and its rights

\* See page 3.

defended on hygienic grounds by statesmen and physicians and philanthropists all the world over. Deep thinkers exclaim with Coleridge—"I feel as if God, by giving us the Sabbath, had given us fifty-two springs in the year." Poetic spirits sympathise with Christopher North's glowing words—"To our hearts, the very birds of Scotland sing holily on that day. A sacred smile is on the dewy flowers: the lilies look whiter in their loveliness: the blush rose reddens in the sun with a diviner dye; and with a more celestial scent the hoary hawthorn sweetens the wilderness." Religious men say "Amen" to the declaration of Chalmers—"We never, in the whole course of our recollections, met with a Christian friend who bore upon his character every other evidence of the Spirit's operation, who did not remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," and agree with Joseph Cook when he styles the Sabbath "the tallest white angel now on the earth." Economists like Proudhon say that it is a mental and physical necessity exactly supplying what the human system demands—"Diminish the week by one single day, and there has not been sufficient labour comparatively to require rest. Extend the week by the same quantity, one more day, the work becomes excessive. Establish every three days one half day of rest, you multiply by the dividing of the week the loss of time, and in cutting the natural unity of the day you break the natural equilibrium of things. Give, on the contrary, forty-eight hours repose after twelve consecutive days of work, you kill man by inertia after having bruised him by fatigue." Physicians echo the testimony of Dr. John Richard Farre—"Although the night apparently equalizes the circulation, yet it does not sufficiently restore its balance for the attainment of a long life; hence, one day in seven, by the bounty of Providence, is thrown in as a day of compensation to perfect by its repose the animal

system," and of the 641 medical men of London who signed this declaration to Parliament—"Your petitioners, from their acquaintance with the labouring classes, and with the laws which regulate the human economy, are convinced that a seventh day of rest, instituted by God, coeval with the existence of man, is essential to the bodily health and mental vigour of men in every station of life." Statesmen have declared with the Earl of Beaconsfield—"Of all Divine institutions, the most Divine is that which secures a Day of Rest for men; I hold it to be the most valuable blessing ever conceded to humanity," or with Mr. W. E. Gladstone—"The religious observance of Sunday is a main prop of the religious character of the country; from a moral, social, and physical point of view, the observance of Sunday is a duty of absolute consequence." And a great army of working men have besought us not to rob them of its priceless blessings.

What is the conclusion to be drawn from all this? Is it not truly stated in these eloquent words:—"Long should pause the erring hand of man before it dares to chip away with the chisel of human reasoning one single word graven on the enduring tables by the hand of the infinite God—to make an erasure in a heaven-born code; to expunge one article from the recorded will of the Eternal. Is the eternal tablet of His law to be defaced by a creature's hand? He who proposes such an act should fortify himself by reasons as holy as God and as mighty as His power. None but consecrated hands could touch the ark of God; thrice holy should be the hands which would dare to alter the testimony which lay within the ark."\*

Lord Macaulay well said, in his memorable speech on the "Ten Hours Bill"—"We are not poorer but richer, because we have, through many ages, rested from our labour one day in seven. That day is not

\* *The Abiding Sabbath*, by Rev. George Elliott.



lost. While industry is suspended, while the plough lies in the furrow, while the exchange is silent, while no smoke ascends from the factory, a process is going on, quite as important to the wealth of nations as any process which is performed on more busy days. Man—the machine of machines—the machine compared with which all the contrivances of the Watts and Arkwrights are worthless—is repairing and winding up, so that he returns to his labours on the Monday with clearer intellect, with livelier spirits, with renewed corporeal vigour.” Most surely, so it is. Heaven avert from these lands the curse of the fancied gain of another day added to the week for pleasure or for work—a day stolen from God!

‘ Bright days ! we need you in a world like this.  
Be brighter still ! ye cannot be too bright.  
The world’s six days of vanity and toil  
Would, but for you, oppress us with their might.

Bright days ! in you heaven cometh nearer earth ;  
And earth more fully breathes the balm of heaven ;  
The stillness of your air infuses calm ;  
Fairest and sweetest of the weekly seven !

Bright days ! abide with us ! We need you still.  
Ye are the ever-gushing wells of time ;  
Ye are the open casements where we hear  
The distant notes of heaven’s descending chime.”



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